

James: Don't 1791
THE

MEMOIRS

OF THE

Countess of *B*ERCI.

Taken from the *French*

By the Author of the *Female Quixote*.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for A. MILLAR, in the Strand,
M DCC LVI

M. E. M. O. I. R. S.

OF THE

Councils of B. E. R. C.

Trans. from the Trans.

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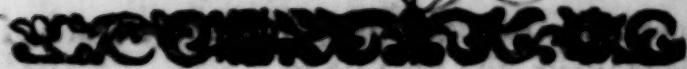
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La Motte



James THE *Sonby*

HISTORY

OF THE

Chevalier DES ESSARS

AND THE

Countess OF BERCI.

PART IV.

THE old Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, being at *Paris* a few Days after his Son's Departure for *Gascony*, happened to meet some Gentlemen of that Province who were just arrived there: he immediately enquired after the Chevalier *des Essars*; and was told that he lived with the old Marquis *des Essars* his Uncle, both intirely engrossed by a very important Affair, which made his Stay in *Gascony* absolutely necessary. The Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* greatly surpris'd, asked them what Affair he could be engaged in, of so much Consequence

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quence as to make him neglect the Care of his Honour and his Life?

‘ I perceive, Monsieur,’ said one of the Gascons, ‘ that you are wholly unacquainted with an Incident which will account for the Chevalier’s Attachment to *Gascony*. He is passionately in Love with a young Lady of that Province: she is called the fair *Amazon*, some very extraordinary Qualities give her a just Claim to this Title. She does not yield in Courage and Spirit to the bravest among us: and if we may judge of her Force by the manly Exercises in which she delights, and really excels in, she equals any of the famed Amazons of old who were so much celebrated for their Valour. With all this, her Person is as lovely as the loveliest of her Sex; her Birth very illustrious, and her Fortune immense. This is the Chain that binds the Chevalier *des Effars* to *Gascony*, and will probably fix him there for the rest of his Life.’

The Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* now no longer doubted, that this new Passion was the Cause of the Chevalier’s Indifference and Neglect not only of them, but his own Honour and Fame. He repented that he had sent his Son into *Gascony*; and returning to *Champigni* full of Resentment, imparted all he had heard to his Wife, to the young Marchioness,

chionefs, and even to the Countefs of *Berci*
his Daughter.

The two former were greatly surprised and afflicted at such unexpected News ; but what Ravage did not the sad Recital make in the Heart of the unfortunate Countess of *Berci* ! She became a Prey to every violent and torturing Passion that injured Love inspires ; Rage, Grief, Jealousy and Shame tore her soft Heart by Turns. Unable, tho' desirous to conceal her strong Emotions, she hastened to her own Apartment, and locking the Door, threw herself upon her Bed in Agonies impossible to be described, or even conceived but by a Woman, injured and forsaken, yet passionately in Love.

Madam *de Berci* had always been remarkable for her Sense and Prudence: her Fortitude, her Resignation under unmerited Infamy, and threatened Death, had acquired her universal Admiration and Esteem; but slighted Love was a Torment she had never felt, and found by sad Experience she was unequal to. Her Grief, at first too big for Utterance, almost rent her tender Frame in Pieces, distractedly she tore her Hair, and beat her lovely Bosom. How altered now from that sweet patient Sufferer, who in a gloomy Prison could be still serene, who could arm her Mind against the Terrors of approaching Death, and self-acquitted despite the Slanders of a malicious World, to which

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which her Fame was sacrificed and her Life condemned. Had she been capable of Reflexion in those sad Moments, she would have loathed herself for a Weakness, unworthy of her Character: but Reason and Religion had now lost their Force, or she rejected their offered Aid, and suffered no Thought to rise in her Mind, but what aggravated her Injuries, and increased her Despair.

‘ Perfidious Wretch,’ cried she as soon as the stubborn Sorrow found vent in Tears, ‘ and ungrateful as perfidious, is it thus ‘ you abandon me after so many Vows of ‘ eternal Fidelity? You might have deferred this cruel Outrage till I had recovered that Honour your fatal Passion has ‘ been the Means of my losing. Alas!’ pursued she wringing her Hands, ‘ my lost Reputation, my cruel Imprisonment, my ‘ ignominious Sentence, all are light Evils ‘ compared with what I feel at being thus ‘ betrayed, despised, abandoned - - - but ‘ I will not live to endure this Misery - - - ‘ Yes, Wretch, my Death - - - Here she stopped upon some Person’s knocking at her Chamber-Door, which she reluctantly opened, ashamed of being found in such Disorder; but seeing only the young Marchioness *de Saint-Sauveur* her Sister-in-law, that tender faithful Friend, from whom she hid no Secret of her Soul, she eagerly strained her in her Arms, and leaning her Head upon her

her Bosom, gave Way to a violent Burst of Tears.

The Marchioness, greatly affected at this Sight, locked the Door carefully again, and then led the fair afflicted Countess to a Sofa, where seating herself beside her, and tenderly supporting her with one Arm round her Waist, while with the other she wiped away the Tears that streamed from her charming Eyes, she endeavoured to comfort her by suggesting every Argument her Imagination could furnish her with in Favour of the Chevalier.

She represented to her, that it was not at all possible, the Chevalier, who had given her a thousand striking Proofs of the most noble, the most ardent Passion that ever animated a Lover, should be able to quit her for any other Woman whatever Beauty and Merit she was possess'd of; nor was it more likely that a Man, so remarkably generous, noble and sincere, should be capable of so black a Perfidy.

‘ But if we could suppose, my dearest
‘ Sister (said the Marchioness) that the Che-
‘ valier was really inconstant to you whom
‘ he has so fervently loved, would he with
‘ a Soul so great and daring, such an eager
‘ Thirst for Fame, so nicely tenacious of
‘ his Honour, would he neglect the glorious
‘ Opportunity that is now offered him, to

' prove his Innocence in the Eyes of all
 ' France? Ah! be assured some other Cause
 ' than a new Passion detains him. Your
 ' Father himself is now of this Opinion, in
 ' which he is confirmed by his having heard
 ' nothing of the Messenger whom he so long
 ' ago sent to the Chevalier. Some Misfor-
 ' tune has doubtless happened to this Man,
 ' and the Chevalier is still ignorant of the
 ' Arrest, and of your Father's Message.

The Marchioness had indeed hit upon the
 Truth, but her Arguments, strong as they
 were, made no Impression upon the Coun-
 tress of *Berci*, whose Jealousy, Rage and
 Despair had so weakened all her reasoning
 Powers, that she was incapable of making
 any Reflexion but what was suggested by
 those furious Passions. She thought herself
 the most miserable undone Woman in the
 World; and in Consequence of this Notion,
 she conceived the most extravagant Design
 that ever entered into the Mind of a Wo-
 man of her Virtue, Education, and natural
 Timidity.

Affecting to seem a little consoled by her
 Sister-in-law's Reasons, she begged to be
 left alone in order to recollect and compose
 herself, that she might be able to appear be-
 fore her Parents the next Day. The Mar-
 chioness left her, after giving her a tender
 Embrace; and *Madam de Berci*, whose Head
 was full of her new Scheme, continued ru-
 minating

minating upon it till her Woman came to take her Commands at Night: she suffered herself to be undrest and put to Bed, pretending that she was extremely sleepy, in order to prevent any Messages from her Parents, and her Sister-in-law; and as soon as she imagined all the Family was asleep, she got out of Bed, and, throwing a loose Gown about her, went softly into her Brother's Wardrobe, where she chose from among several Suits of Cloaths one which he had worn but once or twice, and was less remarkable than any of the others. These Cloaths she put on, and tied up her beautiful fair Hair under a Hat adorned with a green Feather.

Thus metamorphosed, she went softly down Stairs with an Intention to go into the Stable and get a Horse, but recollecting that she wanted a Sword, she returned hastily to the Wardrobe, and finding one to her Wish, plain and unadorned, she made the best of her Way to the Stable, chose one of the best Horses in it, and mounted with great Precipitation, for the Morning now dawned, and she was apprehensive some of the Servants would soon be stirring. She sallied out and took the first Road that presented itself, her Heart throbbing with a thousand new Anxieties, and her Head full of a wild Project which she had too little considered to see all the fatal Consequences of.

Her Design was to travel to *Gascony*, in Search of her faithless Lover, to upbraid him with his Perfidy and to revenge his Loss upon her happy Rival, and then to bury herself in some Solitude where she should never be heard of more.

Oh, Love, how much is thy tyrant Power to be feared, when a causeless Jealousy, an unreasonable Suspicion can produce such dreadful Effects, and thus turn a Woman, wise, gentle, modest, into an extravagant and foolish Adventurer! The Countess of *Berci*, although she had discovered so much Strength of Mind and christian Fortitude while she languished amidst the Horrors of a gloomy Prison, had all that amiable Softness and female Delicacy, which distinguish Women of her Birth, Education and Virtue. Yet behold her now in the Habit of a Man, wandering defenceless and alone. She who preferred her Reputation to her Life, and chose rather to submit to a cruel and unjust Imprisonment, than avoid it at the Expence of bringing any Imputation upon her Honour, now exposed that Honour to the infamous Censures of a malicious World, by wearing a Disguise so little suitable to her natural Modesty, and by a Flight so unworthy of her Prudence and Character. She who had the highest Notions of filial Duty, left her indulgent Parents to all the Bitterness of Grief that her imagined Death could cause, and all the Disgrace so scandalous an Elopement

ment could reflect upon them. Insensible of their Sorrow, of what she owed to the Memory of her murdered Lord, her own Reputation, Life and Virtue, she pursued her desperate Course. Deceived by her own Heart, Revenge she thought was all her Motive for a Conduct in Appearance so extravagant; and a Motive so noble, that, when known, it would be a sufficient Justification.

As soon as she had got out of *Champigny*, her Horse, which had been accustomed to carry the young Marquis frequently from that Village to *Paris*, struck directly into the Road which led to that great City, and brought her to the Gates just as they were opened. Madam *de Berci* could not help sighing when she reflected upon the strange Equipage in which she was now entering a Place where she had formerly enjoyed so much Happiness, and lived in such Splendor. But she was too much engrossed by her present wild Project to dwell long upon those Remembrances, she began now to consider what was most proper for her to do. To prevent being discovered, she did not doubt but as soon as she was missed at *Champigny*, it would be concluded she had taken the direct Road to *Gascony*, and that several Persons would be immediately dispatched in Pursuit of her; she resolved, therefore, to stay some Days concealed in *Paris*, and defer her Journey to *Gascony* till those who

should be sent after her, returned from their fruitless Pursuit, when she might prosecute her Design with Security.

Accordingly she hired an Apartment in the least frequented Quarter of *Paris*; and having desired her Landlord to procure her a Footman whose Fidelity and Discretion she might depend upon, and who was capable to take Care of her Horse, she retired to her Chamber, to indulge a few Hours Repose, if those vain Efforts she made to procure it, may be called Repose. But we will now leave her to the inward Agitations of her own Mind, and return to her Relations at *Champigny*, who were all in the utmost Confusion and Distress.

The young Marchioness, tenderly solicitous for her Welfare, went to her Apartment as soon as she was up; she found her Woman in waiting in the Antichamber who expressed some Surprise at her Lady's not ringing for her at her usual Hour. The Marchioness, a little alarmed, rapped at her Chamber-Door; no Answer being returned, she rapped again, and trembling with her Fears opened the Door immediately after; she advanced hastily to the Bed, and was still more terrified to find she was not there. Recollecting however that the Countess was fond of indulging her Melancholy in a shady recess of the Garden to which she often resorted, Madam de Saint-Sauveur hastily ran thither

thither in full Expectation of finding her; but again disappointed, she gazed around her in Astonishment and Dismay, hardly knowing what she feared, yet full of Apprehension and Grief: having traversed the whole Garden without Success, she returned to the House, flattering herself that she might possibly meet her in her Mother's Apartment; upon her entering the old Marchioness's Chamber, that Lady eagerly advanced towards her, and with a Voice that expressed the highest Terror and Grief, cried: 'Ah! my Dear, have you not then found my Daughter?'

The young Lady's melancholy Looks suggesting the Worst to the apprehensive Mother, 'Alas!' exclaimed she without giving her Time to answer, 'my Daughter is dead.' 'No, no, dear Madam, be composed, said she: I hope no Misfortune has happened to the Countess. I have not seen her indeed, but I hope and believe that she is well, and somewhere in the House.'

The old Marquis, who as well as his Lady, had been alarmed by the Report of the Countess's Woman, that she was not in her Chamber, and who had been searching for her in every Room of the House, came in that Moment with his Daughter's Robe de Chambre in his Hand, which he had found in his Son's Wardrobe. But before he could
speak

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Speak to tell in what Manner he had found it, the unhappy Mother sinking under her Fears at that Sight, fell in a Swoon in the Arms of her Daughter-in-law, who seeing her Colour change, tenderly ran to support her. Proper Remedies being applied, her Senses returned; she opened her Eyes, and faintly groaning: ' 'Tis so, my Daughter's dead,' said she. ' Alas!' said the old Marquis pierced to his inmost Soul with Grief, ' it would be better, perhaps, if she was dead; for she has covered herself and her Family with Infamy.' He then shewed the Robe to his Lady, told where he had found it, and gave it as his certain Opinion, that she had fled disguised in a Suit of her Brother's Cloaths, which he had remembered to have seen him wear, and was not now in the Wardrobe.

This News at any other Time would have plunged the old Marchioness into Despair, but it now released her from an agonising Fear that her beloved Daughter was dead, and was welcomed with some Kind of Joy. But this lasted no longer, than till her Mind, becoming more composed, was at Liberty to reflect upon the shameful Step the Countess had taken; she then saw Things in a different Light, and knew not whether her scandalous Flight was not more to be lamented than her Death. Messengers were immediately dispatched in Pursuit of her, but all returned without Success: the
unhappy

unhappy Parents, however, found some Alleviation of their Grief in the Thought that their Son, to whom they had wrote on Account of the Flight of the Countess, and her strange Disguise, would take Measures to discover her in *Gascony*; for it was not doubted that she was gone thither.

Mean Time the Chevalier *des Essars*, the innocent Cause of all this Confusion, passed his Time very uneasily in *Gascony*; his Uncle was continually pressing him in Favour of *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, he urged to him the great Advantages that would accrue from an Alliance with a Woman of her illustrious Birth, and immense Fortune; he praised her Beauty, her fine Understanding, her Virtue, Spirit, and noble Resolution, so meritoriously exerted in Defence of her Honour and Freedom.

The Chevalier confessed she had great Merit; he admired her Beauty, he praised the noble Qualities she possessed; and he was pleased with her Conversation: but all this produced nothing but a few Visits from him to the charming Amazon, to whom he behaved with the highest Respect and Deference; but the Countess of *Berci* was too much in his Head and Heart to allow of any Expressions of Gallantry which a Beauty so alluring must have forced from any Man whose Affections were disengaged.

The

The Marquis *des Essars* perceived that this Affair advanced very slowly, he was very uneasy at it, and resolved to speak plainer to his Nephew than he had ever yet done. He took an Opportunity one Evening, when the Chevalier was returned from visiting *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, to enter into a Conversation with him, which he had observed with Concern his Nephew had seemed solicitous to avoid. He told him that his own great Age, and his many Infirmities, would no longer permit him to attend to his Affairs, or take Part in any of those Diversions which formerly had contributed as much to his Health as to his Pleasure.

‘ I am now, said he, only capable of enjoying the still Comforts of domestic Life.
 ‘ I earnestly desire to fix you with me.
 ‘ You have hitherto led a dissipated and wandering Life, it is Time that you should settle, take Care of your Estates, and perpetuate your Name. It is not my Intention to hinder you from going to Court, when a proper Opportunity offers, to clear your Innocence with respect to the Deaths of the Counts of *Berci* and *Polan*: but till this Opportunity offers, I would have you make such a Disposition of your Affairs, that I may promise myself you will fix your Residence in this Province, where at my Death you will have such large Possessions; and that I may be assured my Wishes will be gratified, you must think
 of

‘ of marrying some Lady of *Gascany*. I see
‘ none so worthy of you as *Mademoiselle de*
‘ *Gevincourt*: her Birth, her Beauty, her Virtue
‘ and immense Fortune may make her justly
‘ considered as one of the best Matches in
‘ the Province. I know you cannot be in-
‘ sensible to her Charms; and if you have
‘ not yet declared yourself to her, it must
‘ necessarily be, that you are doubtful of suc-
‘ ceeding. But as I have your Marriage
‘ with this Lady greatly at Heart, you may
‘ depend upon it, I will plead your Cause with
‘ the utmost Zeal. I think too well of your
‘ Judgment to be apprehensive, that this Af-
‘ fair will meet with any Difficulties from
‘ you, on account of your unwarantable Pas-
‘ sion for the Countess of *Berci*, to which
‘ your Honour as well as Quiet has been
‘ sacrificed: therefore, I do not think it
‘ necessary to assure you that the Loss of
‘ my Favour and my whole Estate will be
‘ the Consequence of your refusing the Pro-
‘ posal I have made you.’

The Chevalier was a good deal disconcerted by this Speech, to which he listened in a profound Silence, not once offering to interrupt his Uncle, who, he found, was determined to marry him to *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, and he well knew the obstinate old Man never receded from a Resolution he had once taken. His Threat of depriving him of his Estate would have had no Effect on the generous Mind of the Chevalier,

valier, had not the Delicacy and Disinterestedness of his Passion for Madam de Berci made him resolve not to take Advantage of her Tenderneſs, to give her a Husband whose Fortunes were ſo vaſtly below her Quality and Merit. He had been always conſidered as the ſole Heir to the vaſt Poſſeſſions of his Uncle, as well as to his Title: in that Quality he had offered himſelf to the Acceptance of the Counteſs of Berci, his Honour would not permit him, when fallen from his Expectations, to urge her to the Performance of an Engagement made before, nor could his Love bear the Thought of reſigning her.

Amidſt theſe perplexing Extremes, the only Medium was to gain Time, which indeed was gaining every Thing. With this View, therefore, he told his Uncle, that he was extremely ſenſible of his tender Sollicitude for his Happineſs by propoſing a Lady every way ſo accompliſhed as Mademoiſelle de Gevincourt, for his Wiſe: but that it was impoſſible he could think of offering himſelf to her, or to any other Lady of Quality and Merit, while his Reputation ſuffered under infamous Calumnies, that made him unworthy of the Honour of her Alliance.

‘ You muſt permit me, Monſieur, ſaid
 ‘ he, to return to Court: and when I have
 ‘ cleared my Fame, and regained my former unſullied Character, I may then with-
 ‘ out

‘ out Presumption pretend to the Honour
 ‘ of calling such an amiable young Lady, as
 ‘ Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* mine.’

The old Marquis felt the Force of these Reasons; he saw the Propriety of such a Conduct as his Nephew seemed resolved to follow, and although he had some Suspicion that he had not yet forgot the Countess of *Berci*, yet he would not give any Hint of Distrust, lest it should oblige him to come to Extremities with the Chevalier whom he loved with a truly paternal Tenderness. All he required therefore of him, was, that he should visit Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* as often as Decorum would permit, while he continued in *Gascony*. The Chevalier's ready Compliance with his Request so charmed the old Man, that he was the first to hasten his Departure for the Court, in order that every Obstacle to his Marriage might be removed.

Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* placing the Chevalier's frequent Visits to the Score of her own irresistible Charms, made no Efforts to conquer the Passion she felt for him, and which every new Sight of him increased. She might indeed have justly wondered that he had not taken Advantage of any of those Opportunities he had been favoured with, to declare his Passion; but Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* easily accounted to herself for his Silence upon that Head. Haughty as she
 was,

was, and well acquainted with the Power of her own Beauty, she concluded that the Disdain she had hitherto shewn to all those who had presumed to address her, was the true Cause of the Chevalier's Reserve; and that respectful Awe and Fear of offending to which she imputed his not declaring his Sentiments, strengthened the Chevalier's Interest in her Heart, more perhaps, than the most tender Protestations could have done.

Thus willingly deceived, she heard the News of the Chevalier's intended Journey to Court without much Regret, as she looked upon it as a necessary Preparative to her Nuptials: and when he came to take Leave of her, did not fail to attribute to his Eyes a dying Languishment, faltering Accents to his Tongue, and tender Sorrow to his whole Countenance and Behaviour.

The Chevalier, indeed, parted with his Uncle with great Concern, conscious of the Hopes with which the good old Man flattered himself at his promised Return: he looked upon himself as acting an ungenerous Part, but he soon repress the uneasy Sensations this Thought gave Rise to, by the Consideration that he had made no Promise to his Uncle, or been guilty of any Thing that could in Reality be called an Evasion, but only by avoiding an express Denial, held him in Suspense with Regard to his Consent. And now as he pursued his Journey to *Burgundy*,
where

where he expected to find his beloved Countess, the Raptures he indulged in the Hope of soon seeing her, banished every uneasy Reflexion from his Mind.

On his Arrival at *Bordeaux* he heard that a celebrated Tournament was to be held in *England*: he could not resist this Opportunity of increasing his Fame, and fancied that by adding new Lawrels to those he had already gained, he should appear with greater Advantages in the Eyes of his charming Mistress, and with higher Dignity in those of all *France*, when he came to defend his Honour and assert his Innocence. He resolved, therefore, to defer his Journey to *Burgundy* for some Days, and having wrote a tender Letter to the Countess of *Berci*, he dispatched the Turnkey, whom he had made his Valet de Chambre, with it to the Castle of the Marquis de *Saint-Sauveur*, where he thought his Mistress still was, and with his other Domesticks embarked for *England*, where he arrived safe soon after.

The Chevalier des *Essars* had left *Gascony* but two Days when the young Marquis de *Saint-Sauveur* arrived there. He alighted at the Castle of the old Marquis des *Essars*, and was received by that Nobleman at first with some Coolness, his Nephew's Troubles on that Family's Account being all in his Head. The Marquis de *Saint-Sauveur*, after the first Compliments, inquired for the Chevalier,

valier, and being told that he had left the Province two Days before, he proceeded to acquaint the old Marquis with the Steps which his Friends had taken in his Favour at Court. He told him, that his Father had obtained the Chevalier's Pardon of the King for the Death of the Count of *Polan*, upon Condition that within a Month he presented himself at *Paris* to clear himself of the Count of *Berci's* Murder: that his Father had immediately dispatched a Gentleman to *Gascony* with a Letter informing the Chevalier of the King's Decree, but had received no Answer, and the Messenger never returned: that the King had had the Goodness to grant him three Weeks longer, after which no farther Delay could be hoped for; and that, if he did not appear within that Time, he would be declared duly convicted of the Murder of which he was accused.

‘ All *France*, added the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, which has been filled with the
 ‘ Fame of your Nephew's great Actions,
 ‘ astonished at his not appearing to defend
 ‘ his Innocence, begin already to conclude
 ‘ him guilty. His Friends can no longer
 ‘ form Excuses for him; and all that re-
 ‘ mains for them to do, is to present them-
 ‘ selves on the last Day prescribed for the
 ‘ Combat to fight his Accusers in his Stead.
 ‘ But what Disgrace will this reflect upon
 ‘ the Chevalier, that in the Presence of the
 ‘ greatest King in the World, who has con-
 ‘ sented

‘ sented to this extraordinary Method of
‘ trying his Cause, his Friends should ex-
‘ pose their Lives for his Defence, while he
‘ remains in a shameful Security in the
‘ Heart of Gascony.’

The Marquis *des Effars* was charmed with the friendly Freedom of these Remonstrances: he was convinced that his Nephew had great Obligations to the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, and recollected with Grief and Confusion the cool Reception he had given a gallant young Nobleman, who had taken so long a Journey for his Nephew's Interests: he now embraced him with great Affection, expressed the highest Sense of the Favours the Chevalier had received from his Father, and of his own friendly Zeal in coming so far in Search of him. He assured him, that his Nephew had set out for Court two Days before, and did not doubt but he would appear there in Time to redeem his own Honour, and spare his Friends the Necessity of defending his Cause.

The Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* was overjoyed to hear that the Chevalier was gone to *Paris*. He complied with Monsieur *des Effars*' earnest Invitation to stay one Night at his Castle; but could not be prevailed upon for any more. He was resolved, however, not to leave *Gascony* without seeing the celebrated Amazon, whose Charms had obliterated the Memory of his Sister in the Cheva-

Chevalier's Heart. He desired the Marquis *des Effars* to introduce him to her; which he readily did the next Day. The Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* lavished so many Encomiums on Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, that the old Nobleman thought himself well rewarded for the little Journey he had taken to procure him the Sight of her. Monsieur *de Saint-Sauveur* and he, parted with mutual Protestations of Affection and Esteem. The Marquis *des Effars* returned to his Castle, and *de Saint-Sauveur* pursued his Road to *Paris*.

Nothing now was talked of but the famous Tournament that was to be held in *England*. The young Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* caught the Contagion of the Times, and resolved to embrace this Opportunity of shewing his Valour and Dexterity. He wrote Letters to his Father and to his Wife, excusing his Absence a few Weeks longer: and being quite easy with regard to the Chevalier, who, he was assured, was upon his Way to *Paris*, he embarked at *Bordeaux*, as his Friend had done a short Time before him, and arrived in *England* eight Days before the holding of the Tournament.

Mean Time the Chevalier *des Effars* had taken private Lodgings in *London*, and assumed another Name: he gave Orders for a Suit of Armour to be made of the Colour of Ashes, sprinkled with silver Lilies, signi-
fying

ying that he still had Reasons for concealing the Flames of his Love. His Devise was a Cupid in the Midst of a Pile, kindled by a Lady, with this Motto :

He burns continually without being consumed.

He had a Plume of white Feathers on his Casque. His Coat of Arms and the Furniture of his Horse were of the same Colour, embroidered with Silver. Had the too credulous and unhappy Countess of *Berci* seen her Lover in this Equipage, her jealous Torments would have been changed into the softest Transports of Love and Gratitude, to see every Symbol of his mysterious Arms expressive of the Misfortunes he suffered upon her Account, and a Constancy which those Misfortunes could not shake.

The Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, on his Arrival, caused Armour to be made for him covered with bright Flames. On his Shield was represented the God of Marriage, holding a Lady of enchanting Beauty, tied with Bands of interweaved Lilies and Roses, with this Motto :

Contented with the soft Bondage.

His Plume of Feathers was Flame-Colour, and his Coat of Arms and Horse's Furniture Flame-Colour likewise, richly embroidered with Gold.

This

This magnificent Tournament, which was to last three Days, began before our Frenchmen's Armour was finished, and this Delay mortified them extremely. By the Laws of the Tournament the Knights were to just with each other, with Lances tipped with Iron. He who fell in the Tilting, was not permitted to demand the Combat with the Sword: but if both the Combattants fell to the Ground, or if it happened that, after having broke two or three Lances against each other, they remained firm on their Horses, in that Case they had a Right to demand the Combat with the Sword. If it happened also, that the Challengers should be worsted by their Antagonists, the Victors were to take the Place of those whom they had vanquished, and were to challenge all Comers; and this Method was to be observed till the End of the Tournament. Such were the Laws which a Herald at Arms, by the King's Orders, published with Sound of Trumpet, the Evening before the Tournament. The Prize, which was to be bestowed by this Prince, was a Sword of great Value and Antiquity, being that which had been wore by the renowned King *Arthur*, and likewise a Chain of rich Jewels. The Knight, who should remain victorious, was to receive the Sword from the Hands of the Prince of *Wales*, and the Chain from those of the young Princess of *England*. It was this Princess who afterwards was married to a Count *Palatin* of the *Rhine*.

The

The King and the whole Court being seated on Scaffolds prepared for them, the Trumpets sounded, and immediately four English Lords of great Eminence entered the Lifts as Challengers. Nothing could be more magnificent than their Arms and Equipages. They were followed by four other Englishmen habited like Turks, with Turbans on their Heads, Lances in their Hands, and Scymitars at their Sides. After these last had rode round the Lifts, they placed themselves opposite to the Challengers, and at the Signal given by the Trumpets, the eight Knights ran against each other with such Impetuosity that their Lances were shivered in Pieces: the four Turks were thrown to the Ground this first Course, to the great Joy of the Spectators, who filled the Air with their Acclamations. More than thirty Assailants, who successively presented themselves, found the same Fate, while the Challengers at most only lost a Stirrup, or had some slight Accident; so that during the rest of that Day no one was bold enough to encounter with such redoubtable Adversaries: they left the Field victorious and triumphant, amidst the Sound of warlike Instruments and Acclamations of all the admiring Spectators.

The next Day, as soon as the four Challengers had taken their Places, two Strangers, whose noble Mien seemed to promise great Bravery, appeared at the other End of the

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Lists. One of them was in blue Armour, and the other in green. Two of the four Challengers immediately advanced to receive them. They lowered their Lances one against another, and met with so fierce a Shock, that those of the two Challengers being shivered to Pieces, they were thrown off their Horses, and the two Strangers finished their Carieer without being moved, to the great Astonishment of the whole Assembly. The two others who remained, seeing their Companions thus put out of the Combat, advanced full of a noble Rage to revenge the Shame of their Defeat. They turned their Arms immediately upon the Assailants, and all four performed one of the finest Courses imaginable. However, they could not avoid being thrown out of their Saddles as the others had been; and the two Strangers, who had vanquished the four Englishmen, of Assailants, became Challengers, and took their Places accordingly. All the Knights, who presented themselves during the rest of the Day, were vanquished with still less Difficulty than the former. Night put an End to the Justing, and the Victors went out of the Field with the same Pomp and the same Acclamations, as had honoured the Triumph of the Conquerors the preceding Day.

The King of *England*, being desirous to know who these two brave Men were, sent some of his Courtiers to ask them their Names

Names and Country. But they intreated his Majesty's Pardon for not complying with his Request till the Tournament was ended, when they would not fail to pay their Respects to him and take his Orders.

All this passed before the Chevalier *des Essars* could get his Armour. He was in terrible Uneasiness, lest he should be prevented from signalising himself in this Tournament, and a thousand times curst the Workman's Delay: at length on the third Day, and before the Lifts were opened, his Armour was brought: he put it on immediately, and appeared among the first in the Field; but with such a noble Fierceness in his Air and Mien, that he soon drew the Eyes of the whole Assembly upon him.

The two Challengers of the Day before, seeing him advance towards them, judged by his Appearance that he would give them Exercise enough; and each choosing a very strong Lance, they prepared to resist his Efforts. The Knight in green Armour first advanced towards him, and in the Middle of the Course met the Chevalier, who came pouring upon him like a Whirlwind: their Lances were shivered to pieces on each other's Casque, and they finished their Career without any Advantage being gained on either Side, which had never happened since the beginning of the Tournament. New Lances being brought them, they ran against each

other a second time, but with more Force and Fury than the former. The Echoes on the Shores of *Thames* reverberated the Sound of their redoubled Blows, and the Acclamations of the admiring Spectators. The Chevalier *des Essars* lost a Stirrup, and by the Vigour of his Adversary was obliged to stoop even to his Saddle-bow : but the other at the same Instant was thrown with such Force to the Earth, that it was with great Difficulty he was able to rise again ; immediately the Air was filled with joyful Acclamations which celebrated the first Triumph of our Hero.

The Knight in blue Armour, impatient to repair the Disgrace of him with whom he had acquired so much Glory the preceding Day, advanced immediately to meet the Chevalier. The whole Assembly, in an uninterrupted Silence, kept their Eyes fixed upon the two Warriors. They met with equal Impetuosity, and ran three times against each other, without being shaken in their Saddles, to the great Astonishment of the Spectators, who were charmed with the Novelty of such a Combat. Each having broke three Lances, they had Recourse to their Swords. And if in justing they had discovered uncommon Skill and Strength, in this fierce Conflict they gave Proofs of the most exalted Valour. The Chevalier, mad with Rage to see a Man against whom he had broke three Lances, still firm in his Saddle, aimed

aimed so sure a Stroke at him and with such Force, that he made some Pieces of his Armour fly off : his Adversary, resuming new Courage from the Disdain he felt that such an Advantage had been gained over him, redoubled his Efforts, and took ample Vengeance on the Chevalier. The Spectators were seized with Horror at a Combat so obstinate and fierce ; it had already lasted more than an Hour, while neither of them had stopped to take Breath. Their Horses were covered with Sweat and Dust, and the Blood ran down from several Places.

The Chevalier, now perceiving that the Strength of his Antagonist began to fail, retreated a few Steps back, and spoke to him in this Manner : ‘ Noble Unknown, your
‘ Valour is greater than mine, although I
‘ have been more successful than you : there-
‘ fore, since Fortune has openly declared in
‘ my Favour, content yourself with having
‘ given such noble Proofs of Courage, and
‘ suffer our Contest to end. I esteem and
‘ admire you for your heroic Valour ; and
‘ it would fill me with Grief, if so brave a
‘ Man should by my Sword lose a Life
‘ which I would preserve with the Hazard
‘ of my own.’

‘ Whoever you are, replied the Unknown,
‘ I return you Thanks for your Civility :
‘ but do not imagine that I will yield the Ho-
‘ nour of this Day but with my Life ; and

‘ I will sell it dearly.’ The Combat was now renewed with more Fury than before : but it was easily perceived, that the Knight in blue Armour was greatly weakened, and that, although he discovered amazing Courage and Resolution, yet it was with Difficulty he kept his Ground : but the *Chevalier des Essars*, always equal to himself, shewed by his unabated Strength and Vigour, that Victory, after having so long balanced between him and the brave Unknown, was going to declare for him, and that, together with the Prize, the Glory of this celebrated Tournament would be his.

The English Monarch, charmed with the Valour of these Rivals, commanded the Judges of the Field to separate them, that the Triumph of the Victor might not be sullied with the Death of the worthy Rival of his Glory, nor so noble a Solemnity be stained with an Event so tragical. He afterwards decreed a Prize to be given to the four first Challengers who had been Victors the first Day, and another for the two Strangers who had triumphed the second Day : the first Prize of all he reserved for our Hero, in case he should not be vanquished by some other Knight before the End of the Day.

The whole Assembly, astonished at the great Actions performed by the Chevalier, could not believe that any Person would be
daring

daring enough to present themselves to fight with so redoutable an Antagonist, but they were deceived: the brave Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* waited with an extreme Impatience for the End of the Combat that he might offer himself.

The Chevalier *des Essars*, having quitted the Judges who separated him and his Adversary, remained now sole Challenger: the Marquis going up to him, saluted him with great Respect; and observing that his Armour was all hacked, and his Horse and himself all covered with Sweat and Dust, ' Brave Stranger, said he, it is with Reluctance that impelled by the Desire of Fame I demand the Combat with you: ' You who have but just finished one in which you have acquired so much Glory, ' while I bring to the Field a Body not ' weakened by Fatigue, and Armour unpierced. But if you will be so generous ' as to join your Intreaties with mine, we ' will endeavour to prevail upon the English ' Monarch to give us some distant Day, in ' order that you may recruit your Strength, ' and meet me with less Disadvantage.'

' Sir, replied the Chevalier, I am obliged ' to you for your good Intention; but, thank ' Heaven! I do not find myself so much fatigued, but that I can accept the Honour ' you design me now.' At these Words they engaged, and a noble Combat ensued.

Victory stood suspended for more than half an Hour, and the Chevalier was so hard pressed by this brave Rival, that the Assembly was full of Fear, lest he should lose at last the Honour of the Day. But at length a lucky Stroke, which fell with unresisted Force on the Neck of the Marquis, threw him off his Horse, and at the same Time his Casque fell off likewise, the Strings having been cut by the same Stroke. The two Strangers, who had been vanquished by the Chevalier, and had staid in the Field to view the Combat, instantly knew the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, and ran to hinder his Antagonist from making Use of the Advantage he had over him. But he was risen before they came to his Assistance; and the Chevalier, who now knew him also, was seized with Grief for the Victory he had gained over the Brother of his Mistress. He chose rather to lose the Prize of the Tournament which he had so nobly won, than discover himself to the Marquis, and resolved to withdraw that Moment, supposing that it would be adjudged to him who staid last in the Field. But before he went away, he returned him his Sword, which the Marquis had let fall, and he had taken up.

‘ *Monsieur de Saint-Sauveur*, said he, I
 ‘ ought to have known you by the Marks
 ‘ you gave of your Valour, before I disco-
 ‘ vered your Face, and to have voluntarily
 ‘ abandoned to you an Honour which I now
 ‘ see

‘ see myself constrained to yield to your
‘ Victory, for you are still unsubdued. Enjoy
‘ then your Glory and the Prize due to
‘ your Virtue, which I honour and love ; and
‘ be persuaded that I have no less Regret at
‘ having disputed it with you, than Ardour
‘ for your Service.’

Saying this, without waiting for any Answer from the Marquis, who was in the utmost Astonishment at a Generosity so unexampled, he mounted his Horse, and was going out of the Field, but the Marquis stopping him eagerly, ‘ No, Sir, said he, ‘ I will not suffer you to triumph over me this Way. I have no Pretensions to gather those Laurels you have watered with your Blood, nor to enjoy the Prize you have merited by such heroic Valour. I conjure you do not seek to cover me with Shame and Confusion, by resigning to me an Honour due only to yourself.’

The Judges approaching them, and great Crowds of Spectators pressing round them, the Chevalier found it impossible to escape, ‘ I protest (said he to the Marquis, alighting from his Horse) ‘ against the Violence you do me ; and I will continue here only to ‘ accompany you in your Triumph.’ With these Words he took off his Casque, and threw himself into the Arms of the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, who, transported with Joy and Wonder, clasped him close to his Breast,

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‘ Ah ! my dear Friend, cried he, and would
 ‘ you thus have stolen yourself away from
 ‘ a Man who loves you with so much Ten-
 ‘ derness, and fly from one that has so
 ‘ anxiously sought you.’ The two Strangers
 now advanced, and taking off their Casques
 discovered themselves to be the *Chevalier de*
Morigny and the young Count of *Berci* :
 they all four embraced expressing, the highest
 Joy at this unexpected Meeting.

But now the Judges of the Field inter-
 rupted their mutual Embraces to lead them
 to the King’s Scaffold. They all threw
 themselves at the Feet of this Monarch, who
 gave them the Praises due to their Valour,
 although it was apparent that he saw with
 Regret the Glory of that Day carried off
 from his own Subjects by a rival Nation.

The Prince and Princess were just going
 to present the Prize to the Chevalier, who
 kneeled to receive it, when another Knight
 appeared in the Lists, and riding hastily up
 to the King’s Scaffold, alighted from his
 Horse and threw himself at his Majesty’s
 Feet, ‘ Permit one of your own Subjects,
 ‘ my gracious Lord, said he, to demand the
 ‘ Combat with this brave Warrior before
 ‘ you bestow the Prize. There is still Day
 ‘ enough left to redeem the Honour of our
 ‘ Nation ; if not, Night can not come too
 ‘ to cover our Disgrace.’

The

The whole Assembly, who had with Shame and Grief beheld the Victory in the Hands of the French, sent forth loud Acclamations of Joy at this generous Request. The King's Eyes sparkled with Pleasure, but apprehensive that the French Noblemen might think themselves injured, if, after having the Victory adjudged to them, he should permit it to be again disputed, he remained silent and pensive, unwilling to refuse and unresolved to grant. The Chevalier *des Essars*, perceiving his Embarrassment, hastened to relieve him from it, 'Great Prince,' said he, advancing towards him, 'the Laws of the Tournament will not be violated by granting the Request of this Knight. The Hours which remain of this Day are more than sufficient to transfer the Glory of it to him, if Fortune so pleases, or to secure it to me by his Defeat.'

Saying this, and without waiting for the King's Answer, he mounted his Horse and was preparing to enter the Lists, when the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* and his three other illustrious Friends all at once seizing the Bridle, stopped him and declared, that they would first try the Force of this English Knight; and if they were overcome, they should have this Consolation in their Disgrace that he was still reserved to redeem their Fame. The Chevalier with Reluctance yielded to the Arguments of his Friends, and then

then a generous Contest ensued between them who should first engage the English Champion: but the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*'s Claim was generally admitted, as he had entered the Lists last.

The English Knight, who had waited with Impatience for the End of their Contest, now approached and told the Chevalier, That, although he should be fortunate enough to vanquish his Countrymen, yet he did not doubt but their Valour would leave him in such a Condition, that he might with less Shame engage with him, who had sustained their first Efforts.

The Knights now took their Stands, the Judges of the Field resumed their Places, the King and the whole Court sat attentive to the approaching Combat, and the whole Assembly with beating Hearts and anxious Impatience expected the Event. At length the Trumpets sounded, the English Knight and the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* spurred forward with equal Fury, but with different Success. The Marquis was thrown out of his Saddle, and the English Knight finished his Career without being moved in his Seat.

This first Omen of Victory was received with loud Shouts of Joy. The young Count of *Berci* immediately prepared to run against the Vanquisher, and taking a Lance out of
the

the Chevalier's Hands, ' May this be propitious to me ! ' said he ; and spurring forwards, struck it with such Force on the Casque of the English Knight that it shivered in Pieces, but received at the same Time such a weighty Blow from his Hand, that, after reeling a Moment in his Saddle, he fell to the Ground, so stunned both with the Blow and the Fall, that he was not able to rise without Help.

A second time the Shouts of the ravished English celebrated the Victory, and gave new Spirits to their brave Champion. Shame and Indignation filled the Minds of the Chevalier *des Effars* and *Morigny* ; scarce could the former restrain his Impetuosity and hinder himself from rushing to meet this redoubtable Foe : but he would not invade the Right of his Friend, who having now received a Lance from the Judges of the Field, settled himself firm in his Saddle, and all collected in his Strength, advanced to the Encounter. The Lances a Moment after were seen to shiver in Pieces with the Violence of their Strokes, but both kept their Seats and finished their Career with equal Success.

This Equality gave the English some little Uneasiness. A Pause in the good Fortune of their Hero was not what they expected. The Heart, elated by Success, extravagant in its Wishes, and vain in its Hopes, is the
more

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more exposed to Disappointments, and aggravates the slightest Loss.

The Judges of the Field having put two other Lances in the Hands of the Combatants, again they met, again the faithless Weapons eluded their Rage, and spending their harmless Force upon each other's Armour, shivered again to Pieces with the Strokes: they tried a third, and still with the same Success. And now the furious Warriors had Recourse to the Sword: in one Instant they both alighted. The English Knight received a Wound in his left Arm, and the Blood was seen to stream down his Armour: but the *Chevalier de Morigny*, eager to second his Blow, rushed forwards with such Impetuosity upon his Antagonist, that he received the Point of his Sword full in his right Side, and staggering with the Pain, his Weapon forsook his Hand, and he fell senseless at the Feet of his Conqueror.

At this Sight the Assembly rent the Air with their joyful Acclamations. The *Marquis de Saint-Sauveur* and the Count of *Berci*, full of Grief and Consternation, ran to raise their fallen Friend: mean Time the *Chevalier des Effars* advanced with a generous Indignation to meet the Victor, who was now remounted and ready to receive him. The loud Applauses of the Spectators were now converted into a silent Attention. This last Combat was to decide the Conquest,

quest, and give the Glory of the Tournament to their own Countryman, or transfer all the Laurels he had gained to the victorious Frenchman. Both brought an equal Ardour to the Combat; both were stimulated by a Motive equally great and generous, the Honour of their several Nations.

The English sent forth a loud Shout, when they saw their Champion bound from his Post and rush like a Whirlwind upon his Foe: but the Chevalier received him firmly in his Saddle, and without being the least moved by his furious Onset, presented his Shield to the flying Lance on which it broke to Pieces, at the same darting his own at his Antagonist which hit him with such Force that he reeled in his Saddle, lost a Stirrup, and with Difficulty kept himself from falling. The English turned pale with Fear at this Advantage, while the Friends of the Chevalier *des Effars*, who knew the Greatness of his Strength and Courage, beheld it with a Confidence that shewed they were secure of Victory. In the second Career the English Knight lost a Stirrup again: but the Chevalier was so rudely shaken that he was seen to stoop even to his Saddle bow. However, the third finished the Contest, to the utmost Glory of the English Champion, who run so furiously against the Chevalier, that with the Violence of the Shock he was thrown to the Ground. The Air resounded with the rapturous

turous Acclamations of the whole Assembly, when the Victor alighting from his Horse, approached his brave Rival, who had lightly leaped from the Ground almost as soon as he fell.

‘ Noble Sir, said he with a graceful Modesty, as I entered the Lists only to redeem the Honour of my Countrymen, I pretend not to the Prize of the Tournament which your Valour has well deserved, and I disclaim all other Praise, but that of being found equal to you, who have so bravely maintained the Honour of your Nation.’

The Chevalier *des Effars*, charmed with his Generosity and Politeness, took his Hand and pressing it between his, ‘ There is no Disgrace in being vanquished by so brave an Enemy, said he; the Prize as well as the Glory of this Day, are due only to you.’

The Judges of the Field approaching, they led the Victor to the King’s Scaffold. That Monarch, transported with Joy that the Glory of this Tournament had been preserved to his own Subjects, and full of Admiration for the Valour of this British Hero, descended two or three Steps that he might raise him with his own Hand. The noble Victor taking off his Casque, the same Instant, made himself known to be the
brave

brave Earl of *Selkirk*. The King felt an Increase of Pleasure, when he found that his own Country had produced this blooming Champion, and after having honoured him with an affectionate Embrace, he commanded the young Princess his Daughter to bind the Chain of Jewels on his Neck with her own Hands, and the Prince of *Wales* himself girded on the Sword, making him at the same Time a graceful Complement on his Courage and Skill. All this While the Air resounded with the joyful Acclamations of the whole Assembly, and the Name of *Selkirk* was shouted by ten thousand different Tongues at once.

The Victor, discovering a little Confusion at such loud Applause, took Occasion to mention the gallant Frenchmen, extolling in the highest Terms the Generosity and Politeness of the last Challenger. The King immediately dispatched the Judges of the Field to the four brave Frenchmen, who were engaged in a tender and interesting Conversation, with his Request that they would come to his Scaffold. Accordingly they followed the Judges, and kneeling kissed the Hand of the British Monarch, who, after giving great Praises to their Valour, presented each of them with a fine Horse with rich Furniture, and a Chain of Gold with a large Medal of the same Metal, on which was engraved his own Portrait: and understanding that the Chevalier *des Effars* was in
Disgrace

Disgrace in his own Court, he offered him a very large Pension, if he would enter into his Service, which the Chevalier politely refused, as he had done the Archduke when he made the same Offer to him: but expressed at the same Time the highest Acknowledgement for the Honour his Majesty did him.

But it is now Time to account to the Reader for the accidental Meeting of the young Count of *Berci*, and the Chevalier *de Morigny*, at the celebrated English Tournament. The Count of *Berci*, after having travelled through all *Germany*, *Switzerland* and *Flanders*, in Search of *Verague*, came at length to *Holland*, where he was not more successful: tired out with his fruitless Search, he determined to go to *England*, and if he did not meet with this Assassin there, to return directly to *France*. The Chevalier *de Morigny* was cruising near the Irish Seas in a Maltese Galley, in order to give Chace to some Corsairs, according to the Engagements of his Profession, when a violent Storm cast him upon the Coast of *England*. While his Vessel was refitting, he came to *London*, where he proposed to stay a few Days to refresh himself after the Dangers and Fatigues he had suffered at Sea.

As he was walking one Day, examining the Buildings and other Things worthy of Curiosity in that great City, he saw a young Gentle-

Gentleman at a Distance, who he thought had greatly the Air and Look of Monsieur *de Berci*, Brother to his Friend the Count, and as he approached nearer, he found it was really he. The Chevalier *de Morigny* hastily advanced to meet him, and embracing him, expressed the highest Satisfaction at so unexpected an Encounter. The Count, equally surpris'd and pleas'd at the Sight of the Chevalier, returned his Embrace with an affectionate Warmth. The Chevalier carried the Count home to his own Lodgings, and as he was not yet settled, oblig'd him to accept of an Apartment with him; after which they gave each other a mutual Account of all that had happened to them since they last parted.

The unfortunate Death of the Count of *Berci*, which the Chevalier now first heard of, drew Tears in great Abundance from his Eyes; he lamented the Sufferings of his injured Widow, and expressed a generous Rage at the unworthy Suspicions which had been cast on the brave Chevalier *des Esjars*. The young Count of *Berci*, whose Eyes had overflowed at the melancholy Recital of his Brother's Fate, proceeded to acquaint the Chevalier *de Morigny* with the Marriage of the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, and Mademoiselle *de Montmartin*, which was so far from giving him any jealous Emotions, that he felt a sincere Joy for their Happiness, which in some Measure alleviated his

his Concern for the Misfortunes of the rest of that Family.

The Preparations, which were then making all over *London* for the Tournament, inspired the young Count of *Berci* with an eager Desire to make one of the Combatants, and he earnestly intreated the Chevalier de *Morigny* not to leave *London* without taking Advantage of this Opportunity to give some Proofs of that Valour which had already gained him so great Reputation. The Chevalier, tho' fired at the Thoughts of distinguishing himself at this Tournament, yet objected the new Engagements of his Profession, which did not permit him to seek ostentatious Occasions of exercising his Valour: but to employ it in the Service of Religion, and in revenging upon the Infidels the Depredations and Cruelties they were daily committing upon those Christians who were so unhappy as to fall into their Hands. The Count of *Berci* easily found Arguments to answer all he could urge against his Request, and the Chevalier suffered himself to be persuaded to what indeed he was sufficiently inclined of himself.

But we will now return to our four gallant Frenchmen, who as soon as they retired to their Lodgings after the noble Exploits of the Day, renewed their Embraces and tender Expressions of Joy for a Meeting so happy and so unexpected, The Chevalier

lier *des Effars*, being now informed by the Marquis of the urgent Reasons which recalled him to the Court of *France*, resolved to wait on the King of *England*, to take Leave of him, and set out instantly for *Paris*. But, it not being possible for them to be introduced till after his Majesty had dined, they were obliged to moderate their Impatience. That Prince received them very graciously, praised their Valour in very high Terms, and obligingly expressed his Concern that he could not detain such brave Men longer in his Court. A Servant of the Chevalier's having been dispatched to *Dover*, to hire a Packet-boat for their Passage, they returned to their Lodgings, in order to have every Thing prepared for their Departure the next Day.

They were just going to sit down to Supper, when they were told that a French Gentleman, who seemed to be in great Emotions, desired to be instantly introduced to them. They gave Orders for his Admittance, and he entered the Room immediately afterwards, but instead of declaring his Name and Business, as they all expected, he threw himself at the Feet of the Chevalier *des Effars*, and burst into Tears.

The Chevalier, extremely surprised at this Action, endeavoured with great Gentleness to raise him, but to no purpose; he continued still kneeling, and seemed unable to
speak

speak through the Violence of his Emotions: at length he ventured to raise his Head; but his Eyes, which were drowned in Tears, had no sooner encountered those of the Chevalier, than he hastily withdrew them again, and his Head sinking upon his Bosom, he gave Way to another Burst of Tears.

Mean time the Gentlemen, lost in Astonishment, stared upon each other expecting some one would speak and unfold the Meaning of so strange a Scene. The Chevalier again made an Attempt to raise the unhappy Man from his Feet, when he with a supplicating Look bespeaking his Attention, and a Voice low and trembling thus spoke:

‘ You see, Gentlemen, before you, a
 ‘ Wretch unworthy the Light of Heaven.
 ‘ Oh how can I tell you, who I am? How
 ‘ can I make the shocking Recital of my
 ‘ Crimes? My Blood congeals with Horror
 ‘ at the Remembrance of what I have done,
 ‘ impelled by a blind Passion, and acting
 ‘ under the Influence of false Honour. I
 ‘ have destroyed my Soul: Terror and Remorse
 ‘ have seized me, in the Torments
 ‘ of my Conscience, ever since the Perpetration
 ‘ of my Crime, I have too sure an
 ‘ Earnest of Damnation. Behold in me the
 ‘ Assassin of the Count of *Berci*, I come to
 ‘ offer myself a voluntary Victim to your
 ‘ Vengeance, strike, strike, my Lord,’ pursued

sued he to the Marquis de Saint-Sauveur; tearing open his Coat and extending his Arms, 'strike the Murderer of your Sister's Husband; or do you, most noble, most injured Gentleman, said he,' turning to the Chevalier, 'you whose spotless Fame has been blackened with my Deed, do you plunge your Sword into my Breast, and give me a Death too honourable for my Desert. Alas! I acknowledge I ought to die in Torments for the Murder I have committed. I resign myself into your Hands; let me suffer all the Rigour of the Law, I shall then have this Satisfaction in my justly merited Punishment, that I cleared your Innocence before I died.'

The pale, wan Countenance of the self-condemned, unhappy Wretch, his emaciated Body, the deep Despair that sat on every Feature, and glared wild Horror in his Eyes, his mournful Action, altogether so moved the Hearts of our generous Frenchmen, that they felt hardly any other Emotions than those of Pity for a Man who had been so long the Subject of their Execrations, and whom they had resolved to sacrifice to their just Revenge. But the Chevalier, hardening his Heart by the Remembrance of his dear Countess's Sufferings, with a Sternness in his Voice and Eyes, that struck Terror to the Soul of the poor Criminal, though he sought Death, cried: 'Oh! Wretch,

' Wretch, thy Hand deprived a brave and
 ' worthy Nobleman of Life, and brought
 ' Sorrow, Shame, Imprisonment and al-
 ' most Death upon his Widow; a Wo-
 ' man whose Virtues are a Glory to her
 ' Sex. What punishment can equal thy
 ' Crime ?'

' Alas ! Monsieur, ' interrupted the
 wretched *Verague*, ' I carry my Punishment
 ' about me. Here (pursued he, vehemently
 striking his Breast) do I feel my Hell be-
 ' gun. But, alas ! I did not kill the Count
 ' of *Berci* in Malice, nor did I mean to kill
 ' him. Anxious to preserve the Honour of
 ' a Woman I loved, and who had indeed
 ' intrusted it to my keeping, I struggled to
 ' free myself from the Count, who holding
 ' me fast, called aloud for Lights, in order
 ' to discover who I was ; to prevent this, I
 ' aimed a Stroke at the Arm with which
 ' he held me, all I intended being to dis-
 ' able him ; but he, alas ! received it in
 ' his Side. I fled confounded with Fear
 ' and Guilt, but Anguish and Remorse pur-
 ' sued me : that Life I had taken such
 ' guilty Pains to save, became insupportable
 ' to me. All I wished was to clear your
 ' Fame ; and I resolved to do it by deliver-
 ' ing myself up to Justice. Full of these
 ' Thoughts, an Inclination which I had no
 ' Power to resist, drew me to the Tourna-
 ' ment. Alas ! I had no Eyes for Shew,
 ' no Taste for Diversion : but driven along
 ' by

‘ by a secret Impulse, I mixed with the
 ‘ Croud which surrounded the Lists. I knew
 ‘ you all, Gentlemen, immediately upon
 ‘ your taking off your Casques. Providence,
 ‘ I thought, concurred with my Wishes in
 ‘ affording me an Opportunity to satisfy
 ‘ your Vengeance: I followed you hither,
 ‘ prepared to die by your Hands, or meet
 ‘ a more severe Fate from those Laws
 ‘ which I have so greatly offended.’

The Chevalier, sensibly affected with so striking a Proof of Penitence and awakened Honour, would that Moment have raised the unhappy Youth and bid him hope for Mercy, had he not thought it just to leave him wholly in the Power of the Count of Berci and the Marquis de Saint-Sauveur, whose near Relation to the noble Deceased, gave them a better Right to dispose of the Destiny of his Murderer. They perceived his Thoughts by the supplicating Look he gave them, in Behalf of the wretched Offender; and both being greatly moved at the unfeigned Remorse he discovered, assentingly bowed to the Chevalier, who then raised the unhappy Criminal, and giving him a compassionate Look, which penetrated to his Heart, ‘ You have, said he, by thus voluntarily delivering yourself into our
 ‘ Hands, given so convincing a Proof of
 ‘ your Penitence, that we cannot doubt of
 ‘ the Truth of those Circumstances which
 ‘ you alledge in Extenuation of your Guilt.

' I am, therefore, at Liberty to assure you,
 ' that we remit all Thoughts of Vengeance
 ' against you: but it is necessary that
 ' you should make a public Confession of
 ' your Crime, that the Innocence of the
 ' Countess of *Berci* may be fully cleared.
 ' That done, I will endeavour to soften
 ' the Rigour of your Sentence, and since
 ' you have voluntarily surrendered your-
 ' self up to Justice, Mercy, I hope, will
 ' find you.'

Verague could no otherways reply to
 such a generous Speech than by a low Bow,
 and Eyes running over with Tears of Gra-
 titude and Joy. The Chevalier consigned
 him to the Care of their Domestics, and
 they now sat down to Supper with great
 Satisfaction, nor forgot to bless and praise
 that Providence, which by such unexpected
 Means, had brought into their Power, the
 only Person who could clear the Innocence
 of the two illustrious Accused.

Early the next Morning, they took Leave
 of the Chevalier *de Morigny*, who was soon
 to return to *Malta*, and set out for *Dover*,
 taking *Verague* along with them. They em-
 barked immediately on board a small Vessel,
 although the Sailors assured them that they
 were threatened with a Storm, and notwith-
 standing all the frightful Presages of Dan-
 ger and of Death such was their Impa-
 tience to get to *France*, that they insisted
 absolutely

absolutely upon weighing Anchor: but we will now leave them to cross that Arm of the Sea which separates *England* from *France*, and return to *Paris*, where we left the lovely and unfortunate Countess of *Berci* a Prey to the most cruel Despair.

After a Stay of ten Days in *Paris*, she concluded the Search for her would be pretty well over, and that she might now prosecute her Journey to *Gascony* with safety. Accordingly she mounted her Horse early in the Morning, and attended by her new Servant, went out of *Paris*. She had not rode above half a League from that City, when she saw at some Distance a Man on Horseback riding very fast towards it; as he approached nearer she fancied she had seen him before, and at length plainly knew him to be the Turnkey who had delivered her from the Little Chatelet. Her earnest Gazing upon this Man having attracted his Attention, he soon discovered beneath that strange Disguise the Features of his lovely Prisoner. Overjoyed that he had found her, and that he should be able to acquit himself of the Commission his Master had given him, he rode up to her and said softly, for fear her servant should hear, 'I have a Message from the Chevalier des Effars.'

At the Sound of that Name the Blood forsook the fair Cheeks of Madam *de Berci*,

an universal Trembling seized her, she dropt the Reins from her Hand, and would doubtless have fallen off her Horse, had not this faithful Servant of the Chevalier, perceiving her Emotion, hastily dismounted and assisted her to do so likewise. The Countess a little recovered from her first Surprise, ordered her Lacquey to take Care of the Horses, and then retiring with the Turnkey to the Shade of some Trees at a little Distance from the great Road, she asked him with a faltering Voice, 'What he had to say to her?'

Du Pons, for that was his Name, then informed her of his fortunate Meeting with the Chevalier, who had delivered him out of the Hands of the Archers; that ever since he had lived with him in the Quality of his Valet de Chambre, and that upon his Departure for *England* a few Days ago, he had ordered him to go to *Burgundy*, and deliver her a Letter; that not finding her in that Province, and hearing she was in *Paris*, he had determined to seek her in that City, and deliver his Master's Letter to her, tho' at the Hazard of his Life. Saying this, he took a Letter out of his Pocket and presented it to her, adding that his Master intended only to be present at the famous Tournament which was held in *England*, and would return again immediately to *France*.

The

The Countess opened the Letter with a trembling Impatience, she found it filled with the tenderest Assurances of Love and Constancy, and a Promise of soon throwing himself at her Feet, notwithstanding all the Obstacles which opposed it. ‘ Ah ! ‘ Traitor, cried she when she had read it through,’ ‘ must thou add Perjury to Ingratitude, and Deceit to Inconstancy ?’ The Tears which ran in great Abundance from her charming Eyes, as she pronounced these Words, gave the Man some Suspicions of the true State of her Heart. ‘ I am very ‘ sorry, Madam, said he to her, to have ‘ been the Messenger of News which seem ‘ to give you so much Pain.’ ‘ Friend, ‘ replied the Countess, you may tell your ‘ Master that he might have spared this Instance of Deceit, nor attempted to impose upon one who too well knew his Inconstancy : tell him I never more desire to hear him named. His dissembled Love ‘ has been the Ruin of my Reputation, and ‘ the Cause of all the Misfortunes of my ‘ Life, which his Infidelity will soon put ‘ a Period to.’

‘ Ah ! Madam, interrupted the faithful ‘ *Du-Pons*, do not, I conjure you load ‘ my Master with this unjust Reproach, ‘ nor deprive yourself of the Glory of being ‘ served by the most faithful Lover that ever ‘ any Lady could boast.’

' You surprise me greatly, Friend, answered the Countess, by this Language ;
 ' but I conjure you, if you have not entirely lost that Zeal you formerly expressed for my Service, or rather if your new Master has not corrupted your Mind, and rendered it as perfidious as his own, tell me the Truth, disguise nothing from me.
 ' What could induce him to write to me in such passionate Terms, when his Heart is enflamed by a new Object ; an Arcadian Huntress, added she, smiling scornfully, a Puppet drest up with a Bow and Arrows, a mock *Diana* with a borrowed Form. Despicable Wretch ! to fall from loving me to her.'

' Good Heaven, Madam, interrupted the faithful Domestic of the Chevalier, how have, you suffered yourself to be deceived ? What a cruel, what an unjust Opinion have you entertained of the best and bravest of Men ? Pardon, I beseech you, Madam, the Freedom of my Expressions, and impute it to my Zeal for your Interest, and my Regard for Truth, my Master never loved the Lady you mention. His Uncle introduced him unawares into her Company, he beheld her with Indifference, and when in Obedience to the Commands of the old Marquis, who passionately wished for an Alliance between them, he made her some Visits, he behaved with a Coldness and
 ' Reserve

‘ Reserve which must have convinced her, his
 ‘ Heart was otherways engaged. He went
 ‘ to *England* with no other View but to
 ‘ avoid the Necessity of seeing her, or break-
 ‘ ing entirely with his Uncle; and you may
 ‘ depend upon it, Madam, the Chevalier
 ‘ will never return into *Gascony* till he hears
 ‘ that young Lady is married, for her Beau-
 ‘ ty, in which she yields to none of her
 ‘ Sex but to you, her immense Fortune,
 ‘ and the earnest Desires of his Uncle for
 ‘ this Match, were never able to shake
 ‘ his unalterable Affection for you.’

The Countess felt her Heart eased insensibly of part of its Grief by this honest and artless Defence of her Lover. But curious to know every Particular concerning this dreaded Rival, she asked *Du Pont* a hundred Questions about her. His Replies gave her infinite Satisfaction, for she found she was not inferiour to her in any of the Graces and Virtues of her Sex. The martial Spirit of *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, and her Taste for masculine Exercises, were Qualities indeed she did not possess, and would have envied them in no other Woman but her Rival: but she now fancied they gave peculiar Charms. She figured to herself a young and beautiful Girl drest in the pleasing Extravagance of an Amazon, vaulting upon her Steed like a winged Mercury, as the Poet expresses it, and brandishing a Spear in one lovely Hand, and by its

graceful Motion shewing the beautiful Symmetry of her whole Form, her Eyes sparkling with redoubled Rays, and her whole Countenance animated with that daring Spirit which distinguished her from other Women, and exalts her Beauty to something more than mortal.

Thus did her jealous Fancy paint *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt* : she admired the beautiful Picture ; she wished to copy its Graces, emulous of that Part of her Rival's Character in which she only could excel her, she aspired to the Fame of a warlike Beauty, she would like her, study to be fiercely charming, in short she would be an Amazon, and was resolved to give her Lover such a Proof of her heroic Courage and Generosity, as should render her superiour to her Rival in those Qualities for which she supposed he admired her.

This fantastick Design, thus suddenly formed, she told *Du Pons*, that the account he had given of his Master having in part removed her Suspicion, she would desist from the Enterprize she had in hand when she met him, and would return to *Paris*, but desired that he would wait her Commands in *Estampes*, where he might remain concealed, and that he should hear from her in a few Days. *Du Pons*, who had watched her Countenance, and saw in it a much greater Appearance of Tranquility and
Compo-

Composure than before, was charmed that he had rendered such an acceptable Piece of Service to his Master, as restoring him to the good Opinion of the Woman he so passionately loved, promised not to stir from *Estampes* till he received her Orders. *Madam de Berci* then took Leave of him, and mounting her Horse, returned back to *Paris*, and went to her former Lodgings, from whence she dispatched her Servant to an Armourer to bespeak a compleat Suit of Armour, and to finish it with all Expedition.

The Countess of *Berci* had formed no less a Design than to challenge the Count of *Polan*, in behalf of her Lover: if she should happen by some extraordinary Chance to overcome, the Glory was apparent, and if she fell, as it was but too probable, she should at least have the Satisfaction to die in Defence of the Man who had ungratefully abandoned her for a less worthy Woman. So extraordinary a Flight of Generosity, would, as she conceived, crown her with immortal Fame, and give her such an Advantage over her Rival, as would leave her nothing to hope for whether she lived or died, as it must fix her unalterably in the Chevalier's Affections.

The Reader will easily conceive, that the Reason of this unhappy Lady must be greatly disturbed, otherways she could not

have formed so ridiculous a Project. But there was female Pride, Envy, and Jealousy at the Bottom, Passions very capable of inspiring those extravagant Designs which this poor Lady prosecuted with so much Ardour.

The Armour for our new Amazon was finished, and brought home about ten Days before the Time prescribed by the King for the Combat between the Count of *Polan* and the *Chevalier des Essars*. She put it on immediately, and being now armed from Head to Foot, she fancied a Spirit unfelt before invigorated every Limb. Her Stature seemed taller than usual, her Step was firmer, her Bosom glowed with martial Heat, and breathing Defiance and Destruction to all her Enemies, she sallied out of *Paris* with her faithful Attendant, and lodged that Night at *Surene*, from whence she sent her Servant the next Day with the following Letter to the Count of *Polan*.

To the Count of POLAN.

‘ Count,

‘ You have in the King’s Presence offered to fight an absent Man whose very
 ‘ Looks you durst not sustain ; and you have
 ‘ undertaken to maintain by Force of Arms
 ‘ the Truth of an Accusation which you
 ‘ are not able to prove in a Court of
 ‘ Justice. Since the Absence of the Che-
 ‘ valier

‘ valier *des Effars* has given you this Bold-
 ‘ ness, the Justice of his Cause obliges me
 ‘ to shew you, that Envy and not Truth,
 ‘ is the Motive of your Prosecution. For
 ‘ this Purpose I expect you on the Plain of
 ‘ *Surene*, and am confident that I shall be
 ‘ able to repress your Insolence and make
 ‘ you repent of the Injustice of your Proce-
 ‘ dure. Be not solicitous to know my
 ‘ Name, I will declare it after our Com-
 ‘ bat is over, if Fortune is so favourable to
 ‘ leave you your Life. At present be satis-
 ‘ fied with knowing that I am a friend of
 ‘ the Chevalier *des Effars*, whom you hate,
 ‘ and by Consequence, am your mortal
 ‘ Enemy.’

The Countess having informed her Ser-
 vant where to find the Count of *Polan*,
 mounted immediately on Horse-back com-
 pletely armed, and went to attend the
 Count's coming, on the fine Plain which
 lies between *Surene* and the Abbey of *Lon-
 champ*, commanding her Servant to meet
 her there as soon as he had executed his
 Commission.

This Domestic set out instantly on his
 little Journey, and being no less prompt
 in his Obedience, than faithful to his Trust,
 although he knew not who his new Ma-
 ster was, he made such Haste that he
 found the Count of *Polan* still in Bed, when
 one of his Pages, urged by his Importu-
 nity,

nity, introduced him into his Lord's Apartment.

The Count was awake, ruminating on the Charms of the Countess of *Berci*, when her Challenge was put into his Hand. Little did he imagine that it was from so fair an Enemy, he received such a fierce Defiance: after reading the Billet attentively, he began to consider what he ought to do, in a Circumstance so perplexing: he felt an extreme Curiosity to know who this Friend of the Chevalier was, who concealed his Name so carefully, yet was not afraid to expose his Life to defend his Honour and clear his Innocence. He asked the Countess's Servant several Questions, but could draw nothing from him. He knew not what Expedient to use to satisfy this unknown Enemy: for brave and valiant as he was, he was sensibly grieved to be obliged to refuse his Challenge. But he was not willing to make a private Duel forbidden by the Laws, of a Combat authorised by the King. He therefore resolved to refuse the Challenge, and answered the Letter he received, in the following Terms.

The Count of POLAN to his unknown Enemy.

‘ It is true that to revenge the Death of
 ‘ my Brother I have offered, in the Absence
 ‘ of the Chevalier *des Essars*, to fight, any
 ‘ of

of his Friends, who should undertake his
 Defence: but it is not true that I derive
 any Courage from his Absence, or that I
 fear to meet him. You say, if I had been
 able to prove his Crime in a Court of
 Justice, I should not have had Recourse
 to Arms; this may be true: but you
 ought not to infer from thence, that my
 Procedure is the Effect of Envy and Ma-
 lice. If you have as earnest a Desire to
 defend his Innocence, as I have to prove
 his Guilt, it is not necessary to chuse the
 Plain of *Surene* for our Combat, since the
 King has himself appointed a Place for
 the Decision of this Affair by Arms. This
 is the only lawful Way of convincing his
 Majesty, and the whole Kingdom, of the
 Justice of your Cause by the Success of
 your Sword. You have only a few Days
 to wait, during which it will be prudent
 to moderate those Sallies of your Rage,
 which rather merit my Contempt, than
 make you considerable. I shall not seek
 to know your Name, since you dare not
 discover it: but shall satisfy myself with
 knowing that you are my Enemy, and
 hope to prove by your Defeat, that you
 are but a weak Defender of the Chevalier
des Essars,

‘ The Count of Polan.’

The Count, after delivering this Billet in-
 to the Hands of Madam de Bercei's Servant,
 dismissed him, and remained in great Per-
 plexity

plexity concerning the Name of this unknown Enemy, who with such Boldness defied him to a Combat, their Sovereign had expressly forbid. At first he suspected it was the Marquis *de Saint Sauveur*, with whom he had already fought, and who he supposed was not sincerely reconciled to him. A Moment afterwards he imagined it was the Chevalier *des Effars* himself, who was desirous of changing into a private Duel a Combat which the King had decreed to be public. Many different Suspicions rose in his Mind: but not being able to come to any Certainty, he resolved to wait patiently for farther Information, and to submit to the King's Orders, by referring all to a public Decision.

Mean Time our fair Challenger received the Count's Answer with great Concern. She found, she should be obliged to defer the Project her Head and Heart was full of, till the Time prescribed by the King for the Combat: and not knowing what to do with herself the eight Days that still remained, she resolved to retire to *Estampes*, where she had a Kinswoman, Abbess of a Convent, to whom she could fly for Refuge, if she happened to be discovered, and who would afford her a safe as well as honourable Asylum.

While the Countess of *Berci* thus acted Extravagancies unworthy of her Sex, her Modesty

Modesty and Prudence, the old Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, her Father, finding the Day of Combat approach without hearing any News either of the Chevalier, or his Son, became extremely enraged against them both. However he would not abandon the Interests of that Hero to whom he owed so many Obligations, but determined, notwithstanding his Age and Weakness, to support them against the Count of *Polan*. Likewise the old Marquis *des Effars*, having been informed by the young Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* of the State of his Nephew's Affairs at the Court of *France*, set out from *Gascony* a few Days after that young Nobleman left him, in order to undertake his Nephew's Defence, for his Heart misgave him, that not knowing his Majesty's Resolution, he had taken another Rout.

Accordingly on the Day of Battle, three Champions for the Chevalier *des Effars* entered the Lists. These were the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, the Marquis *des Effars*, and the Countess of *Berci*; two feeble old Men and a Woman: yet in the two former the Want of Strength and Vigour was supplied by Courage and Resolution, and in the latter by all those Passions which Rage produces in the Breast of a Woman who loves, and believes herself slighted.

At the other End of the Lists entered the young Count of *Polan*, completely armed; and

and a few Moments afterwards came the King, the Queen, the Princes of the Blood, the Peers of *France*, and all the great Officers of the Crown : four of whom were established Judges of the Combat according to the ancient Laws and Customs of the Kingdom.

When their Majesties were seated upon their Scaffold, the three unknown Knights advanced and saluted them without discovering themselves, but only declared that they were come to defend the Innocence of the *Chevalier des Effars*, not only against the Count of *Polan*, but against all those who should dare to accuse him of having killed the late Count of *Polan* otherways than as a Man of Honour should in a fair Duel. They then intreated his Majesty, that they three might be permitted to fight with the Count of *Polan*, and any two of his Friends whom he should chuse : but the Count would have no Second, and offered to fight them one after another as long as he had any Strength left.

The King would grant neither of their Requests. He commanded the three Unknown to draw Lots who should fight with the Count of *Polan*, and declared, that if he, upon whom the Lot should fall, should be vanquished, neither of the others should be permitted to support the Interests of the *Chevalier des Effars*, but that the Combat should

should end with the Defeat of the first. Although this Decree was absolutely just, yet the three Unknown were sensibly grieved at it: each dreaded he should be excluded from the Combat, but our fair Champion was in despair, she suspected her bad Fortune would deny her the Glory of defending her Lover's Fame, and by that Means of enjoying his Affections undivided; but there was no Remedy, she was obliged to submit, and advanced with the two others who were required to tell their Names. Monsieur de Saint-Sauveur answered the first, that he was called the *Knight of the Eagle*; the Marquis des Effars, that he was the *Knight of the Lion*, and Madam de Berci called herself the *Knight without Hope*, to express her unhappy Situation.

These Names being writ, each upon a small Bit of Paper, they were put into an Urn, and a little Boy, who was there for that purpose, was just preparing to draw them when a fourth Combatant appeared in the Lists, who soon drew the Eyes of the whole Assembly upon him. He was mounted on a Spanish Genet, white as the driven Snow, his Arms of the same Colour, and richly adorned with Silver. The Devise upon his Shield was a Cupid who flung himself among a great Quantity of Darts and Javelins, with this Motto: *Notwithstanding I am defenceless, yet I fear not their Points.*

After

After saluting the King and Queen, without discovering himself any more than the others had done, he told his Majesty, that, having more Interest in this Combat than any of those who had presented themselves, he desired his Justice would interpose, and give him the Preference, or at least that he might be permitted to draw Lots with them.

The King granted the latter Part of his Request, and the New Comer styling himself the *Knight of Monsieur des Essars*, that Title was wrote upon a Bit of Paper which was put into the Casque with the others; they shook them a long Time together, while each with mingled Hope, Fear and Impatience, waited to see in whose Favour Fortune would declare herself. At length the Boy drew the last Comer's Billet out of the Casque: the three others were greatly grieved at their Disappointment, and equally complained of his Arrival, and their own ill Luck.

The Judges now commanded the Field to be cleared. The Combatants withdrew to their several Places, the Trumpets gave the Signal, and after having taken their Career they spurred their Horses towards each other, and met with such Violence that their Lances, striking against the Visors of their Helmets, broke in a thousand Pieces: they now drew their Swords and began a
new

new Combat with equal Fury and with equal Success. The Count of *Polan* was with Justice thought one of the most valiant Men in *France*, nor was his Enemy inferior to him either in Strength, Skill or Agility. The Combat had now lasted above an Hour without any visible Advantage on either Side; the Judges obliged them to take Breath for some Moments, and while with a gloomy silence they darted fiery Glances at each other, the Assembly, lost in Admiration of their Courage and Valour, sent forth loud Shouts of Applause, and expected the Event of such an extraordinary Combat with extreme Impatience.

Some made Vows for one, some for the other, as their different Passions were engaged: but the two old Marquis's and the Countess of *Berci*, although grieved that they were deprived of the Glory of such a Day, implored with Ardour the Assistance of Heaven in Favour of him, who with so much Honour, supported the Cause of the *Chevalier des Effars*.

The two Combatants were preparing to renew the Fight, when a Gentleman suddenly entered the Field; crying out that he had somewhat of great Importance to declare to the King. The Croud made Way for him to the King's Scaffold, where as soon as he arrived, he made a most profound Obeisance and desired his Majesty's Per-

Permission to declare what he knew concerning the Death of the Count of *Polan*; to which the King consenting he spoke in this Manner.

‘ It was but a few Hours ago, Sire, that
 ‘ I heard your Majesty had permitted a
 ‘ Combat between the young Count of
 ‘ *Polan* and the Chevalier *des Effars*, or any
 ‘ Friend of his who in his Absence should
 ‘ undertake his Defence. I was Master
 ‘ of the Horse to the deceased Count, and
 ‘ was present at his Death. No one but
 ‘ myself can inform your Majesty of the
 ‘ Manner of it, since I was unhappy enough
 ‘ to see my dear Master fall, and to close
 ‘ his Eyes. The Chevalier and he fought
 ‘ with equal Success for some Time; at
 ‘ length my Master received a mortal
 ‘ Wound: the Chevalier retired instantly
 ‘ with his Master of the Horse, who besides
 ‘ myself was the only Witness of the Com-
 ‘ bat. I flew instantly to my dear Master,
 ‘ I supported him in my Arms; these were
 ‘ the last Words he spoke to me:’

‘ It is but just that I should fall by
 ‘ the Hand of the Chevalier *des Effars*,
 ‘ I have injured him: the Vengeance he
 ‘ has taken is brave and lawful, Heaven
 ‘ has given the Victory to him that de-
 ‘ served it; I forgive him my Death, which
 ‘ I have justly merited; and from the Good-
 ‘ ness of God and through my sincere Re-
 ‘ pentance

‘ penitance for the Crime I have committed,
‘ I hope for Pardon and Salvation.’

‘ He said no more, and, stifled with his
‘ Blood, he lost at one Instant both Speech
‘ and Life. I was not able to continue in
‘ *Paris* after the Loss of so good a Master.
‘ I travelled through *Italy* and *Flanders*,
‘ amusing my Melancholy with a Variety
‘ of different Objects. When Time had
‘ a little softened my Grief, I returned
‘ to my own Country, on my Arrival at
‘ *Paris* the first News I heard was of the
‘ Combat your Majesty had permitted,
‘ whereupon I came immediately hither, to
‘ declare to your Majesty my Master’s last
‘ Words, to the end that you may make
‘ such Use of them as your Wisdom and
‘ Equity shall suggest.’

When this Gentleman had done speaking, a confused Murmur arose in the Assembly, which broke out at length into Shouts and Exclamations, such was the almost universal Joy at this Confirmation of the Chevalier’s Innocence : when the Noise was a little abated, the King commanded the two Combatants to draw near his Scaffold, and then addressing himself to the Unknown, he asked him what Proof he had of the Innocence of the Chevalier *des Essars*, which he defended with such Confidence and Bravery.

‘ I have

‘ I have no other, Sire, replied the Unknown, than the Glory he has acquired by those many brave Actions he has performed, and which makes it highly improbable he could be guilty of a base Assassination.’

‘ And you, Count, said the King, what Assurance have you, that the Chevalier des Effars assassinated your Brother ?’

‘ Sire, replied the Count, I know that the Chevalier des Effars killed my Brother: I know that he called him to the Field, and no Seconds being employed, it is highly probable, considering the remarkable Bravery and Skill of my Brother, that the Chevalier took him at some unfair Advantage: but be that as it will, my Brother died by his Hands, and I hold my self obliged in Honour to revenge his Death.’

‘ There is more Passion and Prejudice than Honour in your Procedure, replied the King, frowning, and know to your Confusion and Remorse, that I have sufficient Proofs of your Brother’s being the Aggressor in this Quarrel, and (in a low Voice he added) that he justly merited his End. This Man whom you see here, and probably know to have belonged to your Brother, was present at his Death, and will inform you of such Circum-

‘ Circumstances, as will put his Fault out
 ‘ of Doubt. I therefore, pursued his Ma-
 ‘ jesty raising his voice, declare the Cheva-
 ‘ lier *des Effars* innocent of the Assassina-
 ‘ tion of the late Count of *Polan* your
 ‘ Brother: it is my Will that you never
 ‘ more mention this Affair to his Disho-
 ‘ nour, and I command you to embrace
 ‘ not only this Enemy whose Force you
 ‘ have so lately proved, but also the three
 ‘ others who offered to fight with you in
 ‘ Defence of the Chevalier’s Innocence.’

The Count was too politic a Courtier to disobey this Command: without answering the King any otherways than by a low Bow, he remitted his Sword to the Scabbard, and taking off his Helmet, advanced with open Arms towards that Enemy whose Blood he had before so anxiously sought.

The Unknown not willing to be outdone in Politeness, came forwards with equal Eagerness to receive him, and holding out one Hand to the Count’s offered friendly Grasp, with the other pulled off his Helmet, and by the fair long Hair which fell in graceful Curls all over her Shoulders, discovered that that Courage and Valour, which had attracted so much Admiration, were exerted by a young and most beautiful Woman.

A thousands Shouts and Acclamations succeeded to the general Surprise. The
 Count

Count, who at the first Sight of his fair Enemy, had started back in Astonishment, remained for some Moments immoveable, with his Eyes fixed on her Face. His first Emotions were all Shame and Regret, at his having found in a Woman, an Enemy so redoubtable: but when he had well examined that lovely Face, he found her Charms more dangerous even than her Sword, and losing all Remembrance of the Countess of *Berci*, whom he despaired of ever obtaining, he left his Liberty at the Feet of the fair Warrior, and kissing her Hand, vowed to acknowledge her ever for his Conqueror.

The old Marquis *des Effars* acknowledging Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* in the Person of the fair Defender of his Nephew's Honour, came eagerly up to salute her, and taking her Hand led her to his Majesty. *Henry*, ever gallant and polite to Ladies, expressed his Admiration of the extraordinary Beauty and wonderful Qualities of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, in Terms capable of satisfying the most vain and ambitious of the Sex: the charming Amazon by a modest Blush, and Eyes cast down in sweet Confusion, made it evident she had not in her masculine Acquirements, lost any of the female Graces. She knelt graceful upon one Knee to the King, and made a Motion to kiss his Hand: but that Prince instantly raising her, gallantly prest her Lips with his, telling her that
such

such Charms exacted a sweet Homage from the whole World. He then presented her himself to the Queen.

‘ Behold, Madam, said he to that Princess, a new Amazon, whose Beauty yields not to the Fairest, nor whose Valour to the Bravest in my Kingdom : you have often heard of Cavalier’s fighting in Honour of Ladies, but you have now seen a fair Lady exposing her Life to defend the Honour, and assert the Innocence of an illustrious Cavalier.’ The Queen expressed great Admiration of the charming Warrior, and would not suffer her to kiss her Hand, but saluted her with much Civility.

While the thoughts of the whole Assembly were employed on so new and surprising a Spectacle, the unfortunate Countess of Berci under her martial Disguise remained in a Situation truly pitiable. She saw that Glory, she was so ambitious of gaining and upon which she had founded all her Hopes of fixing the Chevalier hers, snatched from her by a Rival, and a Rival so worthy to be loved, that she could not doubt of her Power over any Heart she wished to gain ; she reflected with the most poignant Grief upon the violent Affection Mademoiselle de Gevincourt bore to the Chevalier, which had led her from the Extremities of the Kingdom to expose her Life in so dangerous a Combat, an Affection so

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like her own, equal in its Force, and made more certain by its Consequences. She was now concerned that the Chevalier would not be able to defend himself against the powerful Charms and strong Affection of that wonderful Girl, and that he would love her with an Ardour equal to the Passion she felt for him. With inconceivable Affliction she observed the extraordinary Respect and Tenderneſs ſhewn her by the old Marquis *des Essars*, and thence drew a Proof of her Lover's Infidelity, and declared Intention to marry her. A thouſand times more wretched than before, ſhe withdrew unnoticed from the Aſſembly, and took the Road immediately to *Eſtampes*.

The King having given a very gracious Reception to the Marquiſes *des Essars*, and *de Saint-Sauveur*, who both made themſelves known to him, enquired for the third Champion who had preſented himſelf to fight with the Count of *Polan*. The two Marquiſes declared they knew him not, nor what was become of him. The King curious to know who he was, ordered an Exempt of his Guards to ſeek for him, and inform himſelf of his Name and Quality. His Maſteſty then went into his Coach with the Queen, and returned to the Louvre followed by the whole Court.

It would be difficult to give the Reader an Idea of the Joy felt by the two good
old

old Champions at hearing the Innocence of the Chevalier *des Effars*, publicly declared by the Mouth of the best and greatest King in the World: the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* had now nothing more to wish for, than that his Daughter's Fame might be as fully cleared, which the strong Prejudice against the Chevalier, being so happily removed, made Way for. As for the old Marquis, charmed into Rapture by the noble Action of *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*; he was full of Hopes that his Nephew's Gratitude being so much engaged, he would be no longer able to refuse his Hand to a Woman, who on so many Accounts, merited his utmost Affection.

But it is now Time to return to the Chevalier, whom we left with his Companions crossing that Arm of the Sea which separates *England* from *France*.

Their Vessel had yet made but little Way, when the Storm increasing, they suffered during this short Voyage a thousand terrible Dangers. The Sky became obscured with thick black Clouds, which covered them with a fearful Darkness, interrupted only by Intervals with the horrid Glare of Lightnings, succeeded by Thunder-claps so loud, and long, as if the World was bursting. The furious Winds blew with such Violence and put the Waves into such Agitation, that sometimes their little Vessel was lifted

aloft to the Clouds, and sometimes the Billows breaking beneath it, they feemed swallowed in the vast Abyfs.

The Pilot difmayed, endeavour'd for fome Moments to refift the Storm, and vainly guided the ufelefs Rudder; but was at length obliged to quit it. The Sailors in wild Confternation, no longer obeyed his Directions; and the Terror and Confufion in the Veffel was fo great, that nothing was heard but difmal Cries, confounded with the roaring of the Winds, the dafhing of the Waves and loud Peals of Thunder, that filled every Breaft with Horror unfpeakable.

The Pilot being perfuaded that the Veffel would be wrecked, and willing to take care of himfelf, jumped into the Boat with an Intention to efcape; but the *Chevalier des Effars*, who was attentive to all that paffed, perceiving his Intention, leaped inftantly after him, and holding his drawn Sword to his Breaft, threatened to take away his Life immediately if he did not refume the Government of the Helm. The terrified Pilot feeing Death on all Sides, chofe rather to hazard being fhipwrecked, than meet the Rage of the furious *Chevalier*: but as he was preparing to climb up the Side of the Veffel, a Wave dafhed againft the Boat with fuch Violence as broke the Rope with which it was faftened to the Ship, and in a Moment it was driven from
it

it to such a Distance, that all their Endeavours to join it again, were fruitless.

The Chevalier in an Excess of Rage to be parted thus from his Friends, would have sacrificed the Wretch who was the Cause of this Accident, to his just Revenge, if he had not had Occasion for his Skill to save the Boat from perishing. Mean time his Friends losing Sight of the Boat did not doubt but it was swallowed up by the Waves, and abandoned themselves to Complaints and Despair for the Loss of the Chevalier. Their Vessel for twenty four Hours continued to be tost by the Tempest; at length the Winds ceased, the Sky became serene, and they were landed safely at the Port of *Calais*. Their happy Deliverance inspired them with some Hopes that the Chevalier also might have escaped; but the Uncertainty of his Fate filled them with the most poignant Grief. Although they would willingly have staid at *Calais*, till they had received some certain Accounts of him, yet his Honour and Interest required that they should hasten immediately to *Paris*, that they might be time enough for the Combat with the Count of *Polan*, for they both were determined to defend his Innocence to the last drop of their Blood: accordingly they lay but one Night at *Calais* and set out early the next Morning for *Paris*; nevertheless they could not get there with *Verague*, till the Day after

the Combat, which was a sensible Mortification to them both.

The melancholy News they brought concerning the Chevalier, filled the old Marquis *des Essars* with inconceivable affliction. The whole Family of *Saint-Sauveur* mourned his Loss with as many Tears as if he had been one of their nearest Relations. No one doubted that he had perished in the Boat: but altho' he had indeed been exposed to still greater Danger than his Friends, yet Providence delivered him likewise, the Boat was cast on the Island of *Jersey*, from whence, after a short Stay to refresh themselves, the Chevalier and the Pilot embarked on board a Vessel bound for *Normandy*, and arriving happily at *Rouen*, the Chevalier stopped there a few Days, in order to purchase Horses, Arms and Cloaths, for he was destitute of all.

In the mean Time *Du Pons*, his faithful Valet meeting at *Paris* the Biscayan who belonged to the Chevalier, and who had come thither with the young Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* and the Count of *Berci*, he learned from him the sad News of his Master's Shipwreck. The poor Fellow in the utmost Agony of Grief, resolved to go in Search of the Chevalier; not being able to bear the cruel Uncertainty he was in; but apprehensive of the Despair to which he knew the Countess of *Berci* was reduced, for he had carefully watched all her Motions,

tions, he would not leave *Paris* till he had acquainted her Relations with the Place of her Retreat, and provided for her Safety: he therefore went immediately to the old Marquis *de Saint Sauveur*, and informed him that the Person who called himself the *Knight without Hope*, and who had presented himself on the Day of Combat to fight the Count of *Polan*, was no other than his own Daughter, who upon the Sight of the fair Amazon had left the Assembly in Despair and retired to *Estampes*, where she had remained concealed for eight Days before, waiting for that of the Combat; he added that he had indeed engaged his word to her not to discover her to any one, nevertheless the terrible Situation to which she was reduced from her Jealousy and Grief, had made him dispense with his Promise, which he could not keep but to her Prejudice.

The Marquis, after rewarding this faithful Domestic for his care, communicated what he had heard immediately to his Wife and Son. The old Marchioness was overjoyed to hear News of her Daughter, and the Hope of folding her again in her Arms, banished all Reflection upon the Extravagance of her Conduct. But it was not the same with the young Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, he was inexpressibly grieved at the Dishonour he conceived his Sister had brought upon herself and her Family, by

Expedition which nothing but Madness could excuse.

The old Marquis ordered him to set out instantly for *Eftampes*, but seeing Fury in his Eyes, he recommended it to him to treat his Sister with the utmost Gentleness, since it was to be feared that if any Resentment was shewn to her, it might produce still worse Consequences. The young Marquis promised to obey his Father's Instructions and took Horse immediately for *Eftampes*: when he came to the House where our fair Adventurer lodged, it was quite Night, the Countess was retired to her Chamber, the Door of which she had so well fastened within, that the young Marquis, who had in vain endeavoured to open it without Noise, was forced to knock loudly for Admittance.

Madam *de Berci*, before she would open the Door, put on her Armour, in order to be better concealed. Her Brother upon his Entrance seeing her in such a ridiculous Equipage, could not help laughing, though his Heart was torn with Grief and Shame. Rage now taking full Possession of him, he loaded her with the most cruel Reproaches, as she stood trembling before him; he enlarged upon the Affliction her Parents had suffered, upon her Account; and giving her romantick Expedition a
thousand

thousand cruel Epithets, he told her, her Reputation was ruined for ever.

The poor frightened Countess now plainly knew that she had been betrayed by the Chevalier's Valet de Chambre, and that her whole Secret was known; instead therefore of offering at any Excuse, or resenting her Brother's injurious Expressions, she took off her Casque, and without answering a single Word, let fall a Shower of Tears.

The young Marquis was greatly affected with this soft, and humble Deportment of his Sister, he curst his own Violence of Temper, and catching her as she was ready to sink in his Arms, he embraced her tenderly, asked her Pardon for the cruel Invectives he had uttered, and endeavoured to console her, by all the Arguments that Tenderness and Compassion could suggest. As he had been informed of what she had suffered from that most violent and impetuous of all Passions, Jealousy, he omitted nothing which he thought could undeceive her with regard to the Suspicions she had entertained of the Infidelity of her Lover. He gave her a long and particular Account of all that had happened to the Chevalier in *Gascony* and *England*, and endeavoured to convince her by a thousand Circumstances that he had always loved her with the utmost Ardour. He lessened indeed the Danger in which he had left him, when

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the Boat was unfortunately separated from their Vessel, but he could not disguise from her the Apprehensions he was under with regard to his Safety.

At this melancholy Recital, the Countess felt all her Tenderness for this unfortunate Lover renewed. Her Jealousy vanished in a Moment, or gave place to Emotions of a very different Nature: his Danger only employed her Thoughts, and filled her with a thousand dreadful Apprehensions. She was not capable of tasting any Joy for the fortunate Meeting with *Verague*, important as it was for the Justification of her Innocence: the Idea of her beloved Chevalier perishing in the Waves, engrossed her whole Soul and made her insensible to every Thing else. In this cruel Situation of Mind, she told her Brother, that after the strange Step she had taken, which would cover her with everlasting Confusion, she had not the Confidence to meet the Looks of her offended Parents, and that before he had discovered her, it was her Intention to have retired to *Estampes* in the Convent of which their Kinswoman was Abbess, and she now begged that he would permit her to prosecute her Design, since if it was certainly true that the Chevalier was shipwrecked, she was determined to pass the rest of her Days there.

The

The Marquis would not then contend with her, about her withdrawing entirely from the World, if the Chevalier should be really lost, but approved her Design for the present; judging it would be more honourable for her to be found in a Convent, than concealed in a private Lodging at *Eslampes*. He then desired her to leave her Horse, her Armour and her Servant where they now were, and he conducted her secretly to the Convent; where the Countess was received by the Abbess who knew her Story, with all imaginable Tenderness.

The pious Lady who had been informed of her Flight from the Chatelet, was not surpris'd to see her in the Habit of a Nun, and charmed to have it in her Power to oblige a Lady of her high Rank, and who was allied to her by Blood, she omitted nothing which she thought could console her, and render the Retreat she had chosen agreeable to her.

The Marquis, pleas'd that his Sister was so happily settled, took Leave of her and the Abbess, and returned in haste to *Paris*, and restor'd Peace to the Hearts of his afflicted Parents, by the Account he gave them of their Daughter's present Situation.

Mean time the Exempt, who in Obedience to the King's Orders, had search'd

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all the Villages in the Neighbourhood of *Paris* for the unknown Knight, who had so suddenly disappeared from the Assembly, learned at length that he had been seen to take the Road to *Estampes*. He went thither immediately, and made such diligent Enquiry after him, that he discovered where he had lodged, and found there his Horse and Arms which he carried back with him to *Paris*, but could give the King no other Satisfaction with regard to the Knight himself, than that he had been seen the Day before he came there, to go out with a Gentleman and had never returned since.

The King, as soon as he saw the Arms, knew them to be the same which the unknown Knight had worn, and being very desirous to discover the Owner, he ordered them to be hung up in a publick Place till they were claimed. These Orders were just given, when the fair Amazon arrived at the *Louvre*, to pay her Duty to his Majesty: she had resumed the Habit of her Sex, in which she appeared so beautiful, that she soon captivated the Hearts of several of the young Lords of the Court, who thought it an Honour to wear her Chains, but she beheld these Conquests with an absolute Indifference. The Absence of him, for whom she had undertaken so long a Journey, and so dangerous an Enterprize, damped

damped the Joy she would otherways have felt, at the Power of her Beauty.

The King having caused the Arms that had been just brought him, to be shewn to her, she supposing that they belonged to the *Chevalier des Effars* himself, and that he was the Unknown who had disappeared so suddenly from the Assembly, intreated the King that those Arms might be hung up in the Place of Battle, and that she might be permitted to defend them, against any Person, who should offer to demand them, without making himself known. The King could not help smiling at this Request of the fair Virago, but before he could answer her, she conjured him in the most earnest Manner imaginable, to permit her in the same Place, to support the Innocence of the *Chevalier des Effars*, and the Countess of *Berci*, against those who should accuse them of having assassinated the late Count of *Berci*.

The *Marquises des Effars*, and *de Saint-Sauveur*, and the young Count of *Berci*, were present at this Discourse of the charming Amazon, they knew the Arms of the Countess, and had just before been informed of the Place to which she had retired. But although they had it now in their Power to prove the Innocence of the *Chevalier* and Countess, by the Witness and Confession of the real Assassin; yet they had agreed among them-

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themselves, not to produce *Veragus* till they knew certainly the Destiny of the Chevalier, and therefore took no Notice of Mademoiselle de Gevincourt's Proposal.

The King then turning to the young Count of *Berci*, as being the Person who had most Interest in revenging the Death of the late Count his Brother, asked him if he had any Reply to make to the fair Amazon's Request.

The Count answered, that having always had a great Esteem, and Veneration for his Sister-in-law, on account of her many Virtues, he never entertained the least Suspicion, of her being capable of so black a Crime, and that there was not any Room to believe the Chevalier was guilty of it either.

That great Monarch, then taking Mademoiselle de Gevincourt's Hand, told her smiling, that he would permit her to defend the Arms of the Unknown, on the Conditions she had required, but he refused her the Combat she demanded, since he who was particularly interested in revenging the Count, acknowledged the Countess his Widow and the Chevalier to be innocent: his Majesty then addressing himself to the Marquises des *Essars* and de *Saint-Sauveur*, told them, that the two Persons who were accused, might come to *Paris* without any Fear
of

of a Prosecution, that he would reserve the Examination of this Affair to himself, and that he would give them the Court, for their Prison.

The two Marquises threw themselves at the King's Feet, and expressed the highest Acknowledgment, for this new Mark of his Goodness. They also returned *Maiselle de Gevincourt* Thanks, for her generously offered Defence of the two noble Accused.

The Arms were accordingly carried to the Field of Battle, and laid in a Tent erected there for that Purpose till some one should present himself to demand them. Mean time the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, with the Ladies, accompanied by the Marquis *des Effars*, and the Count of *Berci*, went to *Estampes* to visit the Countess, and to bring her back to *Paris*, where she might now appear, without any Apprehensions on account of her Escape from the Chatelet. She had quitted her Disguise, and assumed the Habit of her Sex.

When she was informed of their Arrival, she appeared before them in such a sweet Confusion as gave new Lustre to her Charms. The Marquis *des Effars*, as soon he beheld her, not only pardoned his Nephew, for his Disobedience, but secretly acknowledged he
was

was in the Right, not to quit so lovely a Creature for any Consideration.

‘ I am not surpris’d, Madam,’ said the good old Man, saluting her with great Respect, ‘ that those who have had the Honour to attach themselves to your Service, should prefer that sweet Slavery to all other Advantages; even I, tho’ bending under the Weight of Years, feel the Influence of your Beauty, and all my Reason is scarce sufficient to preserve me from your Charms.’

The Countess of *Berci*, could not hear Praises so flattering to her Self-love, from the Uncle of the Chevalier *des Effars*, without feeling a conscious Pleasure which sparkled in her Eyes, tho’ her natural Modesty at such extraordinary Encomiums, died her fair Cheeks with Blushes, and kept her for a Moment silent; but recovering herself, she answered his Compliment with so much Wit, and such a graceful Politeness, that the old Man was wholly charmed with her.

Her Father and Mother advancing to embrace her, she turned from the Marquis and threw herself at their Feet, intreating them with Tears, which falling from the finest Eyes in the World, could not fail of gaining all she asked, to pardon her for the Uneasiness she had given them.

The tender Parents raising her eagerly, desired her not to interrupt their Joy at this happy Meeting, by recalling to their Remembrance any past Misfortune. ' And now, my Daughter, (said the indulgent Father, who knew not that she was informed of the Return of *Verague*) thank the Marquis *des Essars*, and the Count of *Berci* your Brother-in-law, together with a beautiful and valiant Lady, that without any Apprehensions of the Chatelet, or any other Prison but the Court, the Chevalier and you, may enjoy the Sweets of Liberty, and be obliged to appear at no other Tribunal but that of the King himself.'

The Countess, pleased as she was, at this News, felt an Emotion at the Mention of the fair Warrior, which for a Moment changed the bright Vermillion of her Cheeks into a languid Paleness; a Sigh stole from her Breast, which was not perceived by all the Company: her Brother and the young Marchioness, her Sister-in-law, who best knew the jealous Doubts which filled her Mind, were the only Persons who observed it, and in order to relieve her from her Embarrassment, they pressed forward to embrace her; she received their tender Caresses with a grateful Sensibility: but embracing her beloved Sister, dropt a tender Tear upon her Bosom, which her full Eyes could not restrain.

After

After a few Hours Stay in the Convent, during which the Abbess received the Thanks of the joyful Parents, for the Friendship she had shewn to their Daughter, they set out for *Paris*, and got there Time enough to go to the *Louvre*. The King being then in the Queen's Apartment, they were introduced immediately to their Majesties.

' Sire, (said the Marquis *des Effars*, presenting the Countess of *Berci* to the King)
' behold the Lady whom the Desire of justifying the Chevalier *des Effars*, for the
' Murder of the Count of *Polan*, induced to
' disguise herself under the Arms which
' your Majesty has committed to the Care
' of a fair and illustrious Warrior. We do
' not present ourselves before your Majesty,
' to intreat they may be restored to her,
' her Beauty is more powerful than all the
' Weapons in the World: but we are
' come to express our Acknowledgement,
' with her, for your Majesty's having been
' graciously pleased to take her Cause under
' your own Cognizance, from which she has
' nothing but the exactest Justice to expect.'

The Countess then throwing herself at the King's Feet, that good Prince, who had never seen her before, for the retired Life she had led for some Years past, had not admitted of her coming to Court, was so struck with her Beauty, which appeared to great Advantage, by her suppliant Posture, and

and the graceful Awe, which sat upon her lovely Features, that forgetting she was kneeling, through the Pleasure he took in looking at her, he suffered her to remain a few Moments at his Feet, when suddenly recollecting himself, he raised her with Precipitation, and politely saluting her, led her to the Queen.

‘ Our Age, Madam, said he, presenting her to that Princess, is fruitful in Prodigious. What think you of this new Amazon? *Ventre Saint Gris!* (his usual Oath) it would have been pity to suffer such a Jewel to be locked up in the Chatelet.’

The Queen saluted her, and smiling, told his Majesty, that those who had taken her from the Place he mentioned, had given a Proof of their Judgment and Sensibility.

The Queen had just done speaking, when Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, who had been informed of the Arrival of the Countess, as also that it was her who owned the black Armour which she had undertaken to defend, entered her Majesty’s Apartment, led by the Count of *Polan*.

‘ Fair Amazon (said the King as soon as he saw her) you must surrender the Arms you guard, unless you resolve to combat
‘ with

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‘ with this charming Lady, to whom they
‘ belong.’ ‘ I am not only ready, Sire, to
‘ surrender those Arms to her, (said Made-
moiselle *de Gevincourt*, curtesying low to the
King, and advancing to salute the Count-
ess) ‘ but also to pay her that Homage,
‘ which a Beauty so transcendant, has a
‘ Right to exact, from the whole World.’

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt, eager to pre-
vent any Suspicions of her being envious of
her Rival’s Perfections, was not aware that
by forcing herself to praise her, she had
descended to Flattery. The Countess of
Berci, from the same Motive, fell into the
same Fault, only that she had a better Ex-
cuse for it, being in some Degree obliged
to answer, her Rival’s Compliment, with
another.

‘ And what Homage is worthy of yours,
‘ Madam, (said she, returning her Em-
‘ brace) which shines with so many Ad-
‘ vantages over me ! Suffer me to acknow-
‘ ledge with Pleasure, a Superiority which all
‘ that Look on you, will readily allow, and
‘ add one Triumph more, to the Numbers
‘ you have already enjoyed.’

It must be confessed, that the Thoughts
of these rival Beauties, were very different
from their Expressions : for from that Mo-
ment they beheld each other with Eyes of
Jealousy

Jealousy and Resentment, and each secretly congratulated herself, for the Victory she hoped to obtain over the other.

But the Heart of the Count of *Polan*, was in a Situation still more extraordinary than these Ladies, and successively felt the Influence of each of their Charms, as he gazed upon them in Turn. Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt's* noble Air ; the Spirit that sparkled in her Eyes, and pointed every Glance ; the graceful Freedom of her Motion ; the Vivacity that accompanied all her Words and Actions ; and that charming Fierceness so suitable to the Peculiarity of her Character, filled him at once with Admiration , Awe and Love.

On the other Side, the languishing Sweetness of Madam *de Berci* ; her Elegance of Person ; the enchanting Sensibility which streamed from her lovely Eyes ; the Tone of her Voice, inexpressibly soft and moving, conveyed such Tenderness to his Heart, that while he gazed upon her, and heard her speak, he was transported out of himself, and lost in an Extasy of mingled Pain and Pleasure. The different Emotions these fair Ones excited in his inconstant Breast, were suitable to their different Graces. He loved Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* with Ardour, the Countess with Tenderness. When he looked upon the fair Amazon, his Heart glowed with impatient Wishes : when he gazed

gazed upon the Countess, he was melted to Softness. For the Person of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* he languished : but sighed for the Heart of Madam *de Berci*. In a Word, he could have been pleased to live for the one ; for the other he would have been content to die.

The Count of *Berci*, less wild, less assuming, and more constant, felt the true Force of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt's* Charms, and from the first Moment he beheld her, conceived a Passion for her, that Time never weakened, nor no new Object, ever changed.

This illustrious Company, after taking Leave of their Majesties, retired greatly satisfied with the new Prospects that were opened to them. All but Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, who observing the Assiduity of the old Marquis *des Essars* about the Countess of *Berci*, the Pleasure with which he had gazed on her, during the Audience she had of the King, and his Eagerness to give her his Hand when she left their Majesties Apartment, conceived so violent a Grief at Symptoms so unfavourable to her Hopes of being his Niece, that she passed the whole Night in Tears and Complaints.

She now concluded, she was despised by the Chevalier, and although he had never professed a Passion for her, accused him of Perfidy and Falsehood. Her Mind being
violently

violently agitated with these Thoughts, she called her Woman early in the Morning, and having sent for the Armour which had been worn by the Countess of Berci, she put it on, and attended only by her Woman, who was disguised in a Man's Habit, she left *Paris* with an Intention to go to *Rouen*, in Hopes of hearing some News of the Chevalier.

The Chevalier's Valet de Chambre, who some Days before had left *Paris* with the same Design, was already arrived in that Capital of *Normandy*, flattering himself, that among the great Number of Strangers which came to that Port, he should meet with some one from whom he might have a Certainty of his Master's Fate.

He had the good Fortune to meet the Chevalier the Day after he came to *Rouen*: but, if he was transported with Joy to see him, the News he brought concerning the Countess, were so many Daggers to the Heart of the Chevalier. In the Letter which this faithful Domestic delivered him from his Mistress, he found nothing but Expressions of Indifference and Irony, so much the more cruel, as it was extremely delicate, and appeared to be dictated by a Heart, entirely at Ease, or at least sensible of no other Emotions, but Scorn and Indignation.

This

This Letter, and the Accounts he received from his Servant, of the Extravagancies acted by the Countess, in the first Transports of her Jealousy, gave him so much Inquietude, that he resolved to set out immediately for *Paris*, and during the Journey he was continually making his Valet de Chambre repeat all that his Mistress had said and done, which had come to his Knowledge, and from those Particulars, sometimes drew some Alleviation for his Uneasiness, and sometimes new Fears, that he had for ever lost her Affection.

He was now within two Days Journey of *Paris*, when he met a Cavalier in Armour, followed by a young Man, and both riding in a great Hurry; as soon as the Chevalier's Valet perceived them, he knew the Armour to be the same that had been worn by the Countess of *Berci*, and did not doubt but it was she herself, who had once more stolen from her Relations, and was going to *Rouen* in Search of the Chevalier: he immediately communicated his Suspicions to his Master, who fond of believing what he wished, eagerly advanced to meet the disguised Lady, and raising the Visor of his Helmet, for he was in Armour, he bowed down, even to his Horse's Mane, and in a submissive Tone, intreated to be heard a few Moments in his Defence.

Made-

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt, for it was she, overjoyed at this Meeting, and at his taking her for the Countess of Berri, resolved to profit by his Mistake, and discover his real Sentiments with regard to her and her Rival. She therefore affected a disdainful silence, lest the Tone of her Voice should make her known to him, and waving her Hand as if she was resolved not to listen to his Excuses, attempted to pass without staying for any farther Discourse.

The Chevalier, in Despair at such cruel Treatment, threw himself instantly off his Horse, and fastening upon the Bridle of hers whom he supposed to be his Mistress, told her that for her Service he had attempted Things the most difficult, and from the Time he had first attached himself to her, had nothing to reproach himself with: he added that if any Reports had reached her Ear, relating to his Passion for Mademoiselle de Gevincourt, he could assure her they were absolutely false; that through Complaisance for his Uncle, he had visited that young Lady several times, because he found it pleased him: but how great soever her Merit might be, it could make no Impression on a Heart long since devoted to her, and incapable of Change. ‘For, oh my adored Countess! (pursued he melting into Tenderness) there cannot be in my Opinion a Woman upon Earth that does not yield to you in Beauty; how improbable is it then, that I
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‘ should forsake you for Mademoiselle de
 ‘ Gevincourt, who is so infinitely your In-
 ‘ ferieur as well in the Graces of Mind as
 ‘ Person.

The Chevalier, still thinking he talked to the Countess of Berci, was going on with a Discourse so mortifying for Mademoiselle de Gevincourt, when she, swelling with mingled Rage and Grief, no longer able to hear her Rival so openly preferred to her by a Man who she thought had loved her with an Excess of Tenderness, turned aside her Head, and shedding a Torrent of Tears, pronounced in a low Voice the Words, *Traitor, perfidious, cruel!*

The Chevalier sensibly affected with that mournful Action and those complaining Accents which he could scarce distinguish, was going to throw himself on his Knees, and solemnly protest that he had never been guilty of the Infidelity she accused him of, when the fair Amazon, reflecting upon the Contempt with which she had heard herself treated, gave a Loose to Indignation and Despair. The Desire of revenging her Wrongs, or of dying by the Hand of her unworthy Lover, that so she might fill him with eternal Remorse and Anguish, now wholly possess her, and dictated such a Reply as she knew would bring him to the Point she wished for.

‘ How

‘How art thou deceived!’ said she, affecting a scornful Tone, and disguising her Voice as much as possible: ‘She, to whom these fine Speeches are addrest, is no more: her frantick Passion for thee brought her in a ridiculous Disguise to try the Force of my Arm. The Death of so contemptible an Enemy would have given me Pain, had I not known that it would be an eternal Source of Misery to thee, whom I am bound to hate. For know to thy Terror, I am the Count of *Polan*, the Brother of him whom thou hast treacherously murdered, and who has sought thee eagerly, that I may sacrifice thee to my just Revenge.’

The Chevalier, who at the Beginning of this Speech was struck with Horror, Amazement and Despair, remained immoveable for a Moment with his Eyes fixed on the supposed horrid Murderer of his beloved Countess. But the Fury that suddenly possessed him suppress’d those first Emotions, and the Desire of sacrificing the Monster who had robbed the World of such Excellence, made him give a Truce to Grief till Vengeance was satisfied. With a Rapidity like Lightning he leaped upon his Horse and drawing his Sword in the same Instant he rushed forwards with an Exclamation that expressed the Rage which animated him, and discharged so heavy a Blow on the Helmet of the fair Amazon as pier-

ced quite through it and made a large Wound in her Head.

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt feeling her Blood issue from the Wound, was transported with a Fury equal to her Enemy, and as he lifted up his Arm to redouble his Stroke, she run her Sword in his Side, and gave him a very large, tho' not a mortal Wound. This Combat, which was continued with more Rage and Animosity than Art, was too violent to last long: their Attendants were Witnesses of the dreadful Spectacle, and knew not what they ought to do. The Woman trembled for the Danger her Lady was in, and the faithful Valet de Chambre thought that Glory and Success had now forsaken his Master. But the Chevalier, who after the Loss of his Mistress rated his Life at nothing, pressed his Adversary with redoubled Vigour, and at length wounding her deeply under the right Breast she staggered on her Saddle, her Eyes swam, her Strength forsook her, her Sword dropt from her Hand, and she fell senseless to the Earth.

Her Woman who eagerly ran to receive her in her Arms, and break her Fall, with loud Cries conjured the Chevalier to stop his Fury. But he who was resolved not to let the Murderer of his Mistress live, leaped off his Horse, and running to his fallen Enemy tore off the Helmet with eager
Rage

Rage, which in one Instant was changed to Shame, Remorse and Anguish when instead of the Count of *Polan* he saw the fair Face of *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, pale as Ashes, her Eyes closed, and the Blood streaming from the Wounds he had inhumanly given her.

His Sword which he held aloft and ready to fall upon his prostrate Foe, now dropped from his trembling Hand, he stepped back a few Paces, and clasping his Hands together in an Agony of Grief, contemplated a few Moments the bleeding fair One who lay senseless and without Motion upon the Ground.

A thousand bitter Reflections arose in his Mind, one Moment he raved at his Valet de *Chambre* for leading him into so fatal an Error, another he complained of *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt* for assuming the Name of his mortal Enemy and urging his Fury by declaring he was the Murderer of the Countess of *Berci*.

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt's Woman, who kneeling wept over her bleeding Mistress, found a gloomy Pleasure in seeing the Transports to which he delivered himself. ' You only (said she) are the Author of my unhappy Lady's Misfortunes. ' You first engaged her Heart by your ensnaring Affiduities. She exposed her Life

' in Defence of your Innocence, and fought
 ' with your most cruel Enemy to preserve
 ' your Honour. She nobly asserted your In-
 ' nocence in the Presence of the whole
 ' Court, and undertook to defend your
 ' Fame against all who should attempt to
 ' traduce it; so many Obligations ought to
 ' have induced you to have spoke less
 ' slightly of her, even to your Mistress:
 ' you should not in any Circumstance have
 ' forgot that she for whom you so openly dis-
 ' avowed any Regard, had hazarded Fame,
 ' Happiness and Life, to secure those Bene-
 ' fits to you.'

The Chevalier, tho' shocked to the Soul
 with these Reproaches, yet found too much
 Justice in them to be offended with the
 forward Zeal of her who uttered them:
 but observing that Mademoiselle de Gevin-
 court lost much Blood, he caused her to be
 carried to a neighbouring Village, where
 they happily found a Surgeon, who after
 examining her Wounds declared they were
 neither mortal, nor dangerous. The Che-
 valier staid till her Wounds were drest, and
 till he heard she was laid in Bed, and then
 recommending her to the Care of the Sur-
 geon, he set out immediately for *Paris*. Not
 having Courage and Resolution enough to
 ask Pardon of her whom without knowing
 he had so cruelly treated; besides, he was
 afraid that the Sight of him might give her
 Emotions which would produce some dan-
 gerous

gerous Alteration in her Health ; he therefore intreated her Woman to make his Excuses to her with all imaginable Submission, and to assure her, that he was in extreme Affliction at what his unhappy Mistake had made him commit against her, and that there was no punishment so severe to which he should not submit, to atone for a Crime which however she must know was involuntary.

The Evening being pretty far advanced when the Chevalier left this Village, he did not reach *Mante* till late at Night. His Mind still more fatigued than his Body, Grief for the Condition to which he had reduced Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, and his Anxiety about his beloved Countess, equally engrossed him ; yet the Certainty that she was not dead, as he had so lately believed, gave him in the Midst of his Inquietude a Joy which more than compensated for the Torments he had suffered.

It happened that the Master of the Inn, at which he alighted, was just returned from *Paris*, with a Gentleman who had accompanied him. The Chevalier, who in the present uneasy State of his Mind, found Solitude extremely disagreeable, invited them both to Supper with him. The Discourse turning upon the News of the Court, the Gentleman, among other Anecdotes, related all that had happened at the Combat

between the Count of *Polan*, and the fair Amazon so celebrated at *Paris*; he likewise mentioned the strange Adventure of the Countess of *Berci*, how, after she had appeared in Armour in the Lists, she suddenly stole away from the Assembly, and retired to *Eslampes*, where her Horse and Armour were found; that the King, at the Request of Mademoiselle de *Gevincourt*, had committed the Armour to the Guard of that fair Warrior, and reserved to himself the Cognizance of the Cause of the Chevalier des *Essars*, and Madam de *Berci*.

He then went on to give an Account of that Lady's Return to Court, the Count of *Polan*'s renewed Passion for her, and that it was the common Opinion she would be married to that young Nobleman.

The Chevalier turned pale at this Discourse, and discovered so much Uneasiness, that the Gentleman supposing the Alteration he perceived in him, proceeded from the Pain of his Wound, advised him to go to Bed immediately. But the Chevalier assuring him that he suffered no Inconvenience from his Wound, which was very slight, begged him to relate all he knew concerning the Count of *Polan*, and Madam de *Berci*.

‘ Sir, (answered the Gentleman) all I know more of the Affair is, that it was
‘ said

‘ said the Count of *Polan* had made very
‘ advantageous Offers to the Marquis *de*
‘ *Saint-Sauveur*, the Father of Madam *de*
‘ *Berci*; that the King is desirous that this
‘ Marriage should go forward; and the pub-
‘ lick Cry is, that the Countess of *Berci*, who
‘ it is known had a Passion for the Cheva-
‘ lier *des Effars*, cannot with Decency mar-
‘ ry a Man who has been accused of assassi-
‘ nating her Husband.’

‘ But what if his Innocence be proved ?’
Replied the Chevalier *des Effars* hastily.

‘ That does not hinder such a Marriage
‘ from being very improper (returned the
‘ Gentleman.) Calumny, tho’ unjust, al-
‘ ways leave a Kind of Stain behind, in the
‘ same manner as a Wound, tho’ perfectly
‘ cured, is always followed by a scar.’

‘ But is it possible, (resumed the Cheva-
‘ lier) that a Man, who has saved the
‘ Lives of that Lady’s Father and Brother,
‘ who made a Voyage to *Africa* to de-
‘ liver her Husband from Slavery, should
‘ be forgot for the Count of *Polan*, who
‘ not only never rendered her any Service,
‘ but has always been the declared Enemy of
‘ her Family ?’

‘ It is said (interrupted the Gentleman)
‘ that the young Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*,
‘ Brother to the Countess, talks loudly
‘ against

‘ against this Match. As for the Countess,
 ‘ she has not as yet declared her Reso-
 ‘ lution ; but her Father and the rest of
 ‘ her Friends being all in the Count of
 ‘ *Polan’s* Interest, it is believed this Af-
 ‘ fair will be concluded agreeable to the
 ‘ King’s Desire.’

These Words were like so many Dag-
 gers in the Heart of the Chevalier. No
 longer able to conceal the Violence of his
 Emotions, he retired to his Chamber and
 threw himself into Bed ; but tortured as he
 was with so many cruel Reflections, he
 could take no Repose ; he rose early in
 the Morning, without having once closed
 his Eyes the whole Night, and rode to *Pa-
 ris* with all the possible Expedition.

The Situation of *Mademoiselle de Ge-
 vincourt* was still more to be pitied, than
 that of the Chevalier *des Effars*, for Hope
 had not yet abandoned him, and he with
 Reason expected, that his Presence would
 produce some favourable Alteration in the
 Minds of his Mistress and her Relations :
 but that unfortunate young Lady was too
 well assured, that she had for ever lost the
 Man whom she loved to Distraction : when
 she recovered out of her Swoon, Remem-
 brance and Reflexion returned, she cast her
 languishing Looks round the Room, and
 not seeing that dear Enemy any longer near
 her,

her, she abandoned herself to the most bitter Complaints.

Her Woman, approaching her Bed, delivered the Chevalier's Message to her.

‘ What then ! (eagerly interrupted Mademoiselle de Gevincourt) he is gone without deigning to say a single Word to her whom he had reduced to so cruel a Condition. Barbarian ! Humanity, if not Tenderness and Esteem, obliged him to remain with me till the Wounds I had received from his cruel Hand, were cured. Ah ! Wretch, ungrateful and unkind ! for him I left my Country, exposed my Life and Fame to a thousand Dangers : For him I appeared in Arms, defended his Innocence, and preserved his Honour ; and is it thus he requites me ?

Here a violent Burst of Tears stopped her Voice. Her Woman assured her that he himself seemed sinking under such a Load of Woe, that his Presence would have given her more Pain than Relief.

‘ He was afflicted thou sayst, (replied Mademoiselle de Gevincourt) and how did he express that Affliction ? He left me senseless, dead in appearance, staid not till he knew, whether I should ever again see the Light of Day. Ah ! the ingrate, the perfidious Wretch ! Why do I not
E 6 ‘ hate

' hate him? Why do I not cast him from
 ' my Remembrance, or only think of him
 ' with Horror and Detestation? But, alas!
 ' (pursued she after a little Pause,) I feel
 ' I love him still, base as he is; his Life is
 ' dearer to me than my own: could I be
 ' assured that he is really afflicted for the
 ' Miseries he has caused me, my Heart
 ' would be at Rest. I must see him once
 ' more, my *Maria*, (said she sighing and
 ' pressing her Hand,) if thou lovest me
 ' or desirest that I should redouble my
 ' Affection for thee, thou must hasten
 ' after this Ingrate: he cannot yet be got
 ' far on his Journey. Intreat him not to
 ' fly from her to whom he owes so many
 ' Obligations. Alas! to what am I re-
 ' duced? But Pride is now no more, I have
 ' been neglected, scorned, treated with
 ' Cruelty by the Man I love, and my Ri-
 ' val openly preferred before me. But tell
 ' him, that I no longer pretend to his Love;
 ' his Promises, for so I understood them,
 ' tell him, I acquit him of: assure him that
 ' I will not attempt to traverse his Passion
 ' for the Countess of *Berci*; but, if need
 ' be, will solicit this happy Rival in his
 ' Favour, and will employ all the Credit
 ' and Interest I have at Court to secure
 ' his Marriage: only let him again re-
 ' turn; let me not have the Mortification
 ' to think he could abandon me in the
 ' sad Condition to which he himself has re-
 ' duced me. Ah! why should he discover
 ' such

‘such Cruelty towards me? I am not of
‘the Number of those who have accused
‘him of basely killing the Count of *Polan*;
‘I never charged him with the Assassina-
‘tion of his Friend: I have publickly, and
‘in a Manner unsuitable to my Sex, de-
‘fended not only his Innocence, but that
‘of his Mistress. Do I not deserve, that
‘he should esteem, if he cannot love me?
‘And his Esteem is all I ask. Tell him
‘so, my dear *Maria*; and tell him that
‘his Presence will contribute to the Cure
‘of those Wounds he has given me; and
‘if he will have the Patience to wait
‘but two Days, I shall be able to accom-
‘pany him to *Paris*, where it is possible
‘I may be of some Service to him. Fly,
‘I beseech thee, lose not a Moment, and
‘do not answer me. Let thy Affection be
‘shown by thy ready Obedience to my
‘Orders. A Servant’s Obedience is the
‘best Proof of Affection.’

The faithful Girl, who loved her Mis-
tress tenderly, staid no longer than to assure
her, she would bring back the Chevalier
or lose her Life in the Attempt. And then
mounting her Horse, although Darkness had
now overspread the Earth, she galloped with
the utmost speed after the Chevalier, and
overtook him just as he left *Mante*, and
was proceeding towards *Paris*.

The

The Chevalier was greatly surprised to see her, and fearing she brought him an Account of her Lady's Death, he remained silent and immoveable for some Moments, not daring to ask a Question which he dreaded to be resolved. But when she had delivered her Message, tho' his Heart was agreeably relieved from the torturing Suspense it had laboured under, yet in the Perplexity to which it reduced him he found inexpressible Anguish.

On the one Side, he reflected upon the cruel Ingratitude of refusing to go back a few Leagues at the Request of a Lady who had travelled above two hundred for him, that Lady too illustrious by Birth, her Merit and her Beauty, to whom he owed Obligations of the highest Nature, and who was languishing with the Wounds he had (undesignedly indeed) given her.

But on the other Side, the raging Jealousy of the Countess of *Berci*, the extravagant Things which Passion had made her act, her Letter so cruelly conceived to torment and mortify him, his Terrors lest the Marquis her Father should take advantage of his Absence to prevail upon her to marry the Count of *Polan*, all this rushed forcibly upon his Imagination; and fixing his wavering resolution, he began to make an Apology to *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt's*
Woman

Woman for not being able to attend her Lady. But that faithful Girl would not hear him out, she threw herself on her Knees before the Chevalier, and painted her Lady's Grief and Despair, and his own Ingratitude, if he refused to comply with her Requests, in such lively Colours, that the Chevalier, whose Heart was totally softened by her affecting Arguments, turned his Horse's Head, and rode with all possible Expedition towards the Village where he had left *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*.

That unfortunate fair One, who had passed the Time in a cruel Anxiety, divided between Hope and Fear, and longing yet dreading the Return of her Messenger, no sooner saw her enter the Chamber followed by the Chevalier, than Joy producing the same Effects as Grief, so forcibly operated upon her now weakened Mind, that she fell into a Swoon from which she was with Difficulty recovered. The first Object she beheld, when she opened her Eyes, was the Chevalier kneeling by her Bed-side, and bathing one of her Hands which he held fast clasped in his with his Tears.

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt agitated by a little Emotion of Anger, which she could not resist, hastily withdrew her Hand, and the Chevalier rising respectfully, retired a few paces gazing on her with profound Attention, and all the Marks of an unfeigned Sorrow

Sorrow deeply impressed upon his Countenance.

Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* found her Resentment instantly subside at such a Proof of the Chevalier's Sensibility. He advanced a little to her Bedside, and twice attempted to speak, but his Confusion was so great, that his Voice died upon his Lips. He was not able to utter a Word, and he could only by Sighs and melancholy Regards upon the wounded fair One express the tender Emotions of his Soul.

Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, who heedfully observed him, was better satisfied with this dumb Eloquence, and the Disorder she was capable of exciting in such a noble Mind, than she would have been with the most elaborate Discourse. She now pardoned all he had done against her: her Eyes lost all their Fierceness, and she beheld him with a Look of mingled Sweetness and Compassion.

The Chevalier, in some Degree relieved from his Confusion by her softened Glances, again kneeling took her Hand, and pressing it respectfully to his Lips,

‘ I take Heaven to Witness, Mademoi-
 ‘ selle (said he) that my Will had no Part
 ‘ in the Outrage you have received from
 ‘ me;

‘ me ; and that, to expiate it, I would freely sacrifice my Life.

‘ Chevalier, (said the beauteous Warrior)
‘ your greatest Offence against me was
‘ committed long ago : then, then, you injured me, when your fatal Arts imposed
‘ upon my Credulity, and ensnared my
‘ Heart ; that is the Outrage I have most
‘ Reason to complain of. The Wounds
‘ your Sword has made, are slight compared with the Pangs my Heart has suffered. But 'tis past ; I no longer pretend
‘ to any Thing but your Friendship. Your
‘ beloved Countess, jealous as she is, will
‘ not refuse me that ; I can do Justice
‘ to her Merit, tho' I was once her Rival,
‘ and confess that my Pride is not wounded
‘ by the Preference you have given her to
‘ me. She deserves your tenderest Affection, may you be happy in each other,
‘ nor need it be interrupted by your generous Concern for me. I am not capable of feeling a Passion for a Man whose
‘ Heart is another's. If I loved it was in
‘ consequence of a Persuasion that I was
‘ beloved, and that by a Person who
‘ merited the Regard I had for him ; my
‘ Passion was founded upon Gratitude and
‘ Esteem : the first cause no longer subsists.
‘ I have no Motive for Gratitude, tho' I have
‘ for Esteem. You have my Friendship
‘ because your noble Qualities merit it, my
‘ Love can only be deserved by one, who
‘ besides

• besides those noble Qualities has a Heart
 • to bestow, and makes me Mistress of it.'

The Chevalier, charmed with the Wit and Spirit of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, expressed his Admiration of her in Terms which greatly flattered her Self-love. He vowed ever to preserve an inviolable Friendship for her, and accepted the Offer of hers with a Transport of Joy and Gratitude. He assured her that he would be ever ready to sacrifice that Life she had been pleased to take an Interest in, for her Service; and readily consented, notwithstanding his Impatience to see his dear Countess, to expect the Cure of her Wounds, which he never mentioned without Emotion, that he might have the Honour to conduct her to *Paris*.

This Instance of his Ardour to please her, contributed more than any Thing else to restore her to Tranquility, her Body soon felt the Effects of the Quiet of her Mind. In three Days she was able to sit her Horse, and on the fourth she complaisantly offered to accompany him to *Paris*.

The Chevalier eagerly embraced her Proposal, and after a short Preparation, they set out together. Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* being so lately recovered, the Chevalier insisted upon making easy Journies, yet his Heart panted with impatience to be in *Paris*, and it cost him a great deal

deal to shew this Complaisance. However on the Evening of the third Day after their leaving the Village they arrived in that great Capital of *France*.

The Chevalier, who was no longer in fear of the Pursuits of the Officers of Justice, proposed to alight at his own Hotel, and offered *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt* the richest Apartment in it: but the fair Amazon prudently declined his Offer, and the Chevalier attended her to the House she had before resided in, and went home with a Heart filled with eager Anxiety, and trembling between Hope and Fear.

He sent immediately a Message to the young *Marquis de Saint-Sauveur*, requesting to see him. That faithful Friend, in a Rapture of Joy, flew to attend his Summons. The Chevalier and he held each other a long time embraced; the young *Marquis* wept with Tenderness and Delight at so happy a Meeting with a Friend whom he had given over for lost; and the Chevalier, melted at the tender Reception he found from the Brother of her whom he passionately loved, suffered the big Tear to stream from his manlier Eye as he clasped him to his Breast, and assured him that his Life was endeared to him by the Value he set upon it.

When

When their first Transports were subsided, they gave each other a mutual Account of what had happened to them since their separation. The young Marquis was very particular in all that related to his Sister, and the Chevalier was so happy as to find by his Discourse that most Part of the afflicting News related to him by the Gentleman at *Mante* was false.

The Marquis owned that the Count of *Polan* had profest a Passion for his Sister, that the Coldness and Reserve, with which she had treated him, had induced him to direct his Affiduities to *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, ' by whom, as it should seem, ' said he his Heart was surpris'd when she ' valiantly fought with him in your Defence: but since her Departure, the wavering Count has again address'd my Sister, ' who, I assure you upon my Honour, looks ' upon him with perfect Indifference, nor ' does he meet with Encouragement from ' any of our Family; and it is the King ' alone who seems desirous the Match should ' go forward.'

This News restored Peace to the Heart of this once wretched Lover. He intreated the Marquis to bring *Verague* with him early in the Morning to his Hotel; and it was agreed, that the Chevalier, attended by all his Friends, should present himself at the *Louvre* and fully justify his Innocence,

cence, and that of the Countess of *Berci*, by the Evidence of *Verague*.

Accordingly the next Morning the Marquis *des Effars*, transported with Joy at the Return of his beloved Nephew, came to his Hotel with Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt*, Messieurs *de Saint Sauveur*, and the Count of *Berci*, who brought with him the unhappy *Verague*. They went altogether to the *Louvre*: and being introduced into his Majesty's Presence, the fair Amazon taking the Chevalier by the Hand, approached the King, and presenting him to his Majesty: 'Sire, (said she) behold the Chevalier *des Effars*, who comes to throw himself at your Feet, not as a guilty Man who wants to implore your Pardon, but as a faithful Subject, who, having by cruel Calumnies been too long banished from your royal Presence, returns with Joy to consecrate the Remainder of his Life to your Service: he brings with him an authentic Testimony of his Innocence, and therefore hopes, he may again be thought worthy to employ his Arms for you, which, when banished and proscribed, he never would do for your Enemies.'

All the Courtiers who were present, as well as the Friends of the Chevalier *des Effars*, secretly applauded this spirited Speech of the charming Amazon. The King was pleased with it, and smiled benignantly upon her,

her, but made no Answer: for the Chevalier shewing *Verague*, and throwing himself at his Feet, thus spoke:

‘ This unhappy Man, Sire, will declare
 ‘ to your Majesty, who was the real Assas-
 ‘ sin of a Friend whose Fate has cost me
 ‘ so many Tears, and loaded me with so
 ‘ many Disgraces. If, after his Testimony
 ‘ is heard, any doubt should remain of my
 ‘ Innocence, and that of the Countess of
 ‘ *Berci*, I am ready to defend her Fame,
 ‘ and my own, with my Sword, as your Ma-
 ‘ jesty had before permitted I should do:
 ‘ nor do I owe less Vengeance to those who
 ‘ have so maliciously accused me without
 ‘ Foundation, since by it they have forced
 ‘ me to abandon my native Country, and
 ‘ pass many Months of my Life in the Dis-
 ‘ pleasure of the greatest and the best of
 ‘ Kings.’

Here the Chevalier ceased speaking: the King graciously commanded him to rise, and looking upon *Verague*, asked him, what he had to declare concerning the Death of the late Count of *Berci*?

That unhappy Man, throwing himself at the King's Feet with Tears, confessed, that he was the sole Author of the Count's Death: he related his criminal Intrigue with *Marianne*, the Countess of *Berci's* Woman, the Danger she had been in of being discarded with
 Infamy

Infamy by her Lady on that Account, and of the young Count of *Bercei's* Interposition in her Favour, which procured her a Pardon on Condition she behaved well for the future.

He added, that taking an Opportunity to visit his Mistress when the Count and his Lady were at an Entertainment, given by the Marquis de *Saint-Sauveur* on account of his Son's Marriage, the sudden and unexpected Return of Monsieur and Madam de *Bercei* put them in the utmost Consternation; that endeavouring to make his Escape, he was seized by the Count in the Dark, and anxious for the Preservation of his Mistress's Honour, and finding no other Way to disengage himself, he attempted to wound the Count in the Arm by which he held him, but that unfortunate Nobleman, by a sudden Motion, received it in his Breast, and it proved mortal to his eternal Remorse and Grief.

Here Tears for a few Moments drowned his Voice; but recovering himself a little, he added, that, not being able to bear the Stings of his own Conscience, which perpetually reproached him not only with the Count's Murder, but the unjust Sufferings of Madam de *Bercei*, and the Chevalier des *Essars*, on that Account, he came voluntarily, and delivered himself up to the Chevalier: and having now justified his Innocence, and that of the Countess of *Bercei*, he
was

was ready to suffer the Punishment the Law ordains for Crimes like his.

The King, surprised at this Confession, ordered *Marianne* to be immediately brought into his Presence, and confronted with her Lover, to the End that nothing might be wanting for the full Justification of the Countess and Chevalier.

The unhappy Wretch, too secure in the Success her vile Arts had hitherto met with, to dread any Discovery from so unexpected a Question, was seized by the Exempt of the Guards, dispatched by the King for that Purpose, without any Difficulty, and was brought to the *Louvre*, where, when she beheld *Verague*, all her Confidence forsaking her, she threw herself on her Knees before the King, and with Tears and Groans confessed all the Circumstances *Verague* had before declared, but implored a Pardon with clamorous Prayers.

The King, perfectly satisfied with the Confession of the two Criminals, annulled all the Proceedings against the Chevalier and the Countess, and moved with Compassion for the unfortunate *Verague* whose Crime, as it was involuntary, admitted of some extenuation and was likewise atoned for, by his sincere Repentance and accusing himself to clear the Chevalier and the Countess. His Majesty in Consideration of all this, granted

granted him his Life, but banished him from *France* for ever. The infamous *Marianne* was condemned to be shut up between four Walls, for the rest of her Life, and only Sustenance enough allowed her, to keep her from starving, that she might have Leisure to repent of the Enormity of her Crimes, and make her Peace with Heaven.

When his Majesty had pronounced these different Sentences, the Marquises *des Essars* and *de Saint-Sauveur*, approached and, with all Humility thanked the King for the Justice he had done the Countess and the Chevalier.

The Friends of the latter now gave free utterance to the Expressions of their Joy for his happy Return, and this publick Proof of his Innocence. But the Chevalier eager to present himself to his dear Countess, on whom his Eyes were almost always fixed, disengaged himself at length, and advanced towards her with a tender Awe: but she who had with the severest Pangs of Jealousy seen his Entrance with the fair Amazon, and heard her Address to the King in his Favour, gave way to the Impetuosity of her Rage, and when he bowed to her with the utmost Reverence as to a Deity, turned disdainfully from him, and without deigning to give him a Look, fell into Discourse with the Count of *Polan* who stood near her, while the Chevalier struck dumb and immovable

by such an Instance of Contempt, continued a few Moments gazing upon her as if he doubted whether the Woman who treated him in that Manner, was really the Countess of *Berci*, whom he had so faithfully adored, and by whom he had once imagined himself tenderly beloved. Pride and Resentment now came to fortify his Heart against the Grief he felt at such an Alteration: after casting a Look full of Contempt upon his Rival, and Indifference on his Mistress, he mixed among a croud of Ladies by whom he was received with such an emulative Respect and Distinction, as sent Daggers to the Heart of the capricious Countess, who now repented of the rash Folly she had been guilty of, and unable longer to stay in the Presence, she went away so suddenly, that the Chevalier, who angry, as he was, could not help often turning his Eye towards her, was surprised when he found she was gone. It gave him some Satisfaction to find the Count of *Polan* still there; for *Madam de Berci*, unwilling to aggravate the Fault she had been guilty of, would not admit of his Attending her to her Coach, but requested that Service from her Brother. The Chevalier, who had found it difficult to suppress his Emotions, and support that Gaiety and Unconcern he had assumed while he was in the Sight of his ungrateful Mistress, took the first Opportunity to retire, and was conducted by his Uncle and the Marquis de
Saint-

Saint-Sauveur to his Hotel, where he received from that tender Parent and faithful Friend a thousand endearing Testimonies of unfeigned Affection.

Mean time the Count of *Berci*, who became every day more charmed with *Mademoiselle de Gevincourt*, was anxious for the *Chevalier's* Marriage with his Sister-in-law, that he might no longer have such a formidable Rival in the Affections of his Mistress. He had a Conference with the young *Marquis de Saint-Sauveur* on that Subject, and representing to him that it was Time the *Chevalier's* faithful Passion, which to him had been productive of so many Misfortunes, and so many brave and generous Services to the Countess and her Family, should be rewarded with the Prize he had so well deserved, prest him to speak to the *Marquis* his Father in the *Chevalier's* Favour.

The young *Marquis* was charmed with this friendly Solicitude in the Count of *Berci*; he did not fail to give it Praises which called up a Blush in the Face of the ingenuous Youth, who was conscious of another and stronger Motive for that Conduct. It was agreed between them, that, while the *Marquis* went to talk to his Father on this Subject, the Count should go to the *Marquis des Essars*, and urge the same Arguments, in order to induce him to hasten a

F 2

Marriage

Marriage between two Persons who had suffered so much for each other.

The two good old Men received the Proposal with great Satisfaction: to the Esteem the old Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* had for the Chevalier, nothing could be added; nor to the Admiration of the Marquis *des Effars* for the Countess of *Berci*. Little did they imagine that the Marriage they so readily agreed to, would meet with Obstacles from the two Persons, whom they believed wished for it with most ardour.

The Marquis *des Effars* was no sooner assured of the Assent of the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur*, but he hastened to communicate the good News to his Nephew, whom he expected to see in Transports at his Feet: but what was his Astonishment when he heard him coldly answer, that the Uneasiness he had felt, on account of the Calumnies his Character had so long laboured under, and the Dangers he had so lately suffered at Sea, had given his Thoughts another Turn, and he had made a Vow to remain single for some Years.

The Countess of *Berci* also, when her Father mentioned his Design of bestowing her upon the Chevalier, told him with a well personated Tranquility, that during her Residence in the Convent at *Estampes* she had Leisure to contemplate the calm Pleasures

tures of a recluse Life, and was persuaded that it was greatly to be preferred to the most splendid Condition the World could afford her; that therefore she had resolved to quit it and retire to that Monastery as soon as her Process was ended.

The good old Men were astonished and confused at Answers they so little expected, and their Perplexity was so much the greater as they durst not acquaint one another with what had happened, lest they should make a Breach which would be impossible ever again to close.

Not being able to comprehend the Meaning of so sudden and surprizing an Alteration in their Sentiments, they could not suppress their Anger at what appeared to them to be the mere Effect of Disobedience and Caprice.

‘ What ! (said the Marquis *des Effars*
 ‘ to the Chevalier) when I would have
 ‘ married you to Madam *de Gevincourt*,
 ‘ an Alliance upon which I had set my
 ‘ Heart, because it was so greatly to your Ad-
 ‘ vantage, you excused yourself on account of
 ‘ the Journey you was indispensibly obliged
 ‘ to make to Court, while your true Reason
 ‘ was that you was engaged to the Coun-
 ‘ tress of *Berri* : and now when convinced
 ‘ of her great Merit, I propose to unite
 ‘ you with her, you talk to me of Vows,

‘ and pious Reveries. Do as you please ;
 ‘ but remember that if you persist in such
 ‘ an unreasonable and absurd Behaviour,
 ‘ you will force me to place that Affec-
 ‘ tion I have had for you, on some other
 ‘ Person who will make a better Use
 ‘ of it.’

The Marquis de Saint-Sauveur, as he had
 most Cause, was still more enraged with
 the Countess of Berci. ‘ By what unac-
 ‘ countable Caprice are you governed ? (said
 ‘ he to her) you have suffered the Cheva-
 ‘ lier des Effars to conduct you into so-
 ‘ reign Countries, and lived for several
 ‘ Months under his Protection, you left
 ‘ my House secretly to go in Search of
 ‘ him, you have disguised your Sex, for-
 ‘ got your Rank, and laid aside your Cha-
 ‘ racter, appearing in Arms to defend his
 ‘ Cause at a Time when you thought your
 ‘ self forsaken by him : And now when
 ‘ his Fidelity to you is fully proved by his
 ‘ Rejection of a lovely and generous Maid to
 ‘ whose Affection he is so greatly obliged,
 ‘ when your Father offers him to your Ac-
 ‘ ceptance, you refuse his Hand. But go
 ‘ to Estampes, shut yourself up in a Con-
 ‘ vent if real Piety leads you thither : go
 ‘ and be happy. But trust my Experience
 ‘ this Resolution is not the Effect of Piety,
 ‘ or calm Reflections on the Peace and
 ‘ Tranquility of a cloistered Life. That
 ‘ Caprice by which your Actions have been
 ‘ lately

‘ lately governed, sways you now. Go
‘ then and repent, for that will be the Con-
‘ sequence of a Design not taken up upon
‘ mature Deliberation, but the Result of a
‘ heated Imagination, and a Judgment weak-
‘ ened by Passion and Prejudice. Whatever
‘ happens you may be sure of my Pity, al-
‘ though your ridiculous and disobedient
‘ Conduct gives you no Claim to my Af-
‘ fection.’

The Marquis had no sooner quitted the
Countess, which he did at the Conclusion
of this Speech, than she began to repent of
the Uneasiness she had given her Father,
and ardently wished, she had not treated her
Lover with such Cruelty and Contempt. For
she now saw Things in another Light, and
condemned herself for judging so rashly of
his Appearance with the fair Amazon, since
it was certain that she loved him, and that
he might have married her, if his Heart had
been capable of Change. Her Pride would
not suffer her to make the first Advance to-
wards a Reconciliation, which she now
eagerly wished for : but still she expected the
Chevalier should purchase it by new Sub-
missions on his Part. Little did she imagine
that that Heart, in which she had once such
absolute Dominion, was now wholly en-
grost by two Passions, that were mortal Foes
to Love. Rage at the cruel Affront she
had given him in the Presence of the whole
Court, turned all his Thoughts towards
F 4 Revenge,

Revenge, which he was resolved to gratify, tho' at the Expence of his eternal Quiet.

In this Disposition of Mind, he wrote a Letter to his ungrateful Mistress, which he gave to his Valet de Chambre with Orders to deliver it into her own Hand. He then privately left *Paris* in the Evening, taking his Course along the *Seine*, full of uneasy Thoughts, and uncertain how he should dispose of himself.

In the mean Time, the Marchioness de *Saint-Sauveur*, and her Daughter-in-law, that dear and tender Friend of the Countess of *Berci*, having been informed by the Marquis her Father, of her Refusal to marry the Chevalier des *Essars*, and her new Resolution of retiring to a Convent, were inexpressibly concerned: they went both together to her Apartment, where the Countess, vanquished by their Importunity, and her own Inclinations, promised to give her Father that Proof of her Obedience which he required, and acknowledged her unchanged Love for the Chevalier.

These two Ladies were highly pleased that they had succeeded so happily with the Countess, whom in their Hearts they could not but think extremely capricious, and were impatient to communicate the good News to the Chevalier; but while the young Marchioness was writing a Letter to that Effect,

Effect, the Chevalier's Valet de Chambre brought one to the Countess which was conceived in these Terms:

‘ After the Proofs you have given me,
‘ Madam, of the Levity of your Temper,
‘ and the Inconstancy of your Heart, I can
‘ with Difficulty believe, you are the same
‘ Person whom for many Years I have so
‘ religiously adored. Blind and insatuated
‘ as I was, I would once have preferred the
‘ sweet Slavery, to which you had reduced
‘ me, to the most splendid Rank For-
‘ tune could have bestowed upon me. But
‘ the Illusion is vanished, the undeserved
‘ Contempt you have treated me with has
‘ opened my Eyes, and restored me to my-
‘ self. I have loved you, Madam, with a
‘ Passion which no Time could weaken, no
‘ Accidents alter. It is one Part of my
‘ Happiness now, that I can say, I have
‘ loved you: and another, tho’ less confi-
‘ derable, that injured as I am by you, yet
‘ I have been so fortunate as to render you
‘ Services which no other Man ever can,
‘ and could only be paid by your Affection,
‘ to which I now no longer lay claim.
‘ Banish them from your Thoughts, Ma-
‘ dam, as well as my Person; for this is the
‘ last Time I shall ever endeavour to bring
‘ either them, or myself, to your Remem-
‘ brance. I leave you free to make new
‘ Conquests, and to triumph in new Acts

of Inconstancy: and, contented with having recovered my Liberty, can with perfect Indifference bid you eternally Farewell.'

The Countess of Berci, pierced to the Heart with the Reproaches contained in this Letter, but more at the cruel Indifference of the Writer, apparent in every Line, had scarce Strength enough to read it through. The Words, 'I bid you an eternal Adieu,' seemed to have Power to separate her Soul from her Body; and losing Sense and Motion, she fell lifeless on the Sopha, where she was sitting when she received the fatal Billet.

Madam de Saint-Sauveur, entering her Daughter's Apartment, and seeing her in that Condition, shrieked aloud, and was very near sinking likewise into a Swoon. The young Marchioness was one of the first who ran to the Countess's Apartment: terrified at the melancholy Objects she saw before her, with one Arm she supported the fainting Mother while, with the other she endeavoured to raise the Countess. Two or three Women entering, they applied proper Remedies to both. The Countess opened her Eyes with a Sigh, and as soon as she was a little recovered, desired she might be left alone with her Mother and Sister-in-law, to whom she shewed the Chevalier's
cruel

cruel Letter; and while they were reading it, cald her loaded Heart by a Shower of Tears.

The two Marchionesses, not knowing the Cause which the Countess had given for such a Letter, were equally surpris'd and angry at it. Madam de Berci was not ingenuous enough to tell them what had happened: but took a gloomy Pleasure in hearing him condemned by those two Ladies for a Conduct so inconsistent with the Passion he had confest for her, and with that Politeness and Discretion which made up so considerable a Part of his Character. But tortured with her own Reflexions, and despairing of ever being able to recover the Heart of a Man who had quitted her with such a seeming calm and steady Resentment, she sunk under the violent Perturbations of her Mind, and was seized with a Fever, which in a few Days brought her so low that her Life was despaired of. Her Youth, however, and a naturally good Constitution, saved her: but she continued in a weak and languishing Condition for three whole Months, and plunged in so deep a Melancholy as filled the Hearts of her Parents, and all to whom she was dear, with inexpressible Disquiet.

But to return to the Chevalier *des Essars*. After he had sent the Letter to the Countess of Berci, he left his Hotel presently, and

and passing the *Seine*, went to *S. Clou*, where he lay that Night: early in the Morning he renewed his Journey, and leaving the Village of *S. Clou* on his left Hand, he struck into the road on the right Hand of *Surene*, near which was a Mountain long celebrated for having afforded a Retreat to several illustrious Persons. The Chevalier reached the Summit of this Mountain just as the Sun was beginning to gild the Earth with his Rays. He stopped a few Moments to take Breath, and to contemplate the most beautiful rural Prospect in the World, which was varied by a vast Number of fine Villages, and superb Palaces: but the loveliest Object of all was that renowned River, which, after passing through the Middle of that Queen of Cities to which it continually carries Riches and Plenty, seems to leave her with Regret, and slowly gliding through this rich Country, forms a thousand and a thousand imperceptible windings in its meandering Course.

The Chevalier felt a secret Satisfaction steal to his Heart at the View of this enchanting Place; the new and pleasing Objects around him, the soft Melody of the Birds, the gentle Breathings of the Wind that wafted Odours as it past, the pleasing Stillness, all contributed to charm his Senses, and lull him into a sweet Oblivion of former Grievs. Transported at the sudden Change he felt in his Mind, and fondly hop-

hoping, that the Calm he now experienced would be secured by fixing his Residence in this delightful Spot, he took a Resolution to return no more to *Paris*, but to hide himself from the World, and pass the rest of his Life in a peaceful Retirement, alike undisturbed by the Pangs of Love, and the Fever of Ambition.

The Solitaries, who inhabited Mount *Valerian*, received their new Inmate with Joy; his Air and Mien spoke him a Person of Distinction; his Conversation and Behaviour a Man of Sense and Politeness. The Cell he chose had a little Gallery close to the Chapel where he could hear Mass without being seen: he had a small Garden adjoining to his Cell, which he took delight to cultivate with his own Hands. Several Hours in the Day he past in the Conversation of those Religious who to the greatest Sanctity joined the most pleasing Manners, and an uninterrupted Chearfulness with the strictest Piety.

Among these reverend Persons the Chevalier distinguished one to whom a secret Sympathy particularly attached him. He was already past the Prime of Life, but seemed more impaired by Affliction than by Years; his Person had an Air of Dignity which at first sight, commanded Respect. There was a certain Grace in every Thing he said, and did, which insensibly captivated

vated the Heart : his Countenance expressed a fixed Melancholy, through which, notwithstanding, shone a Benignity and Sweetness, that made every Beholder sympathise in his Sadness, but with such a sweet Sensation as a good Heart feels when it contemplates a Misfortune it wishes and thinks itself able to relieve.

It was easy to perceive that he had been extremely handsome in his Youth. His uncouth Habit could not wholly conceal the Graces of his Figure, nor could Time and Grief produce any Alteration in the Harmony of his Features. The Chevalier eagerly sought his Company and Conversation, and the Solitary found so many Charms in that of the Chevalier, that he spent all those Hours which he had to spare from his religious Duties with him. To a mutual Friendship a mutual Confidence succeeded, the Chevalier disclosed his Name and his Misfortunes to the Solitary, who likewise related to him the History of his Life in the following Manner.



The History
OF THE
Count DE COMMINGE.

THE House of *Comminge*, from which I am descended, is one of the most ancient and illustrious in the Kingdom. My Great Grand-Father, who had two Sons, was so extremely fond of the Youngest, that he settled some very considerable Estates upon him, in prejudice to the Right of his elder Brother, and gave him the Title of Marquis of *Lussan*. The Partiality of my Ancestor did not weaken the Friendship between his two Sons, which increased with their Years. They would have their Children brought up together, but by giving them thus their Education in common, instead of uniting them by stricter Ties than those of Blood, which was their sole View in it, they rendered them Enemies almost from their Birth.

My Father who was always excelled in his Exercises by the young Marquis of *Lussan*, conceived a Jealousy at it, which soon degenerated into a fixed Aversion. They often quarrelled, and my Father being always the Aggressor, it was he who was always punished.

One Day when he complained of this Treatment to the Steward of our Family, 'Know, (said this Man to him) that you will have it in your Power to repress the Pride of the Marquis of *Luffan*, all the Estates he possesses are entrail'd upon you and your Grand-Father could not dispose of them: when you are the Master (added he) it will not be difficult for you to recover your Right.'

This Intimation convincing my Father that he had it in his Power to be revenged of his Cousin, made him set no Bounds to his Resentment. Their Quarrels became so frequent and so violent, that there was a Necessity for separating them. They were many Years without seeing each other, during which they were both married. The Marquis of *Luffan* had only a Daughter by his Wife, and my Father only a Son by his, which was my-self.

As soon as my Father came to the Possession of his hereditary Estate by the Death of his Grand-father, he determined to follow the Advice that had been given him, while he was yet a Youth, and which he had never lost Sight of: he omitted nothing that could render his Claim unquestionable, and rejecting several Proposals for an Accommodation, commenced a Law-suit with the Marquis of *Luffan*, which could not but

but terminate in the despoiling him of all his Estates.

An unhappy Rencontre which they had one Day in a hunting Match rendered them for ever irreconcilable. My Father, whose vowed Revenge was never out of his Thoughts, said several cruel Things to the Marquis of *Luffan* upon the despicable State to which he expected soon to reduce him. The Marquis, tho' naturally mild, could not help answering him with some Haughtiness. They had Recourse to their Swords: Fortune declared in favour of Monsieur de *Luffan*: he disarmed my Father, and bid him ask his Life.

' I should hate it (answered my Father fiercely) if I owed it to thee.' ' Yet, Spite of thy self thou shalt owe it to me, (said the Marquis de *Luffan* throwing him his Sword) after which he instantly left him.'

This generous Action did not move my Father in his Favour, on the contrary the double Victory his Enemy had gained over him, increased his Hatred; and he carried on the Suit against the Marquis de *Luffan* more vigorously than before. However when his Hopes were highest, he received some Accounts from his Lawyers, which effectually dashed them. This Disappointment threw him into such Transports of
Rage

Rage and Grief as brought on a dangerous Fever, under which he languished a long Time; and in this State I found him at my Return from my Travels upon which I had been sent immediately after my Studies were finished.

A few Days after my Arrival, the Abbot *de R....* a Kinsman of my Mother's, sent Notice to my Father, that the Writings, which alone were able to prove his just Claim to the Estates possessed by the Marquis *de Luffan*, were in the Archives of the Abbey of *R....* to which Place many of the Papers belonging to our Family had been carried during the civil Wars.

My Father was desired by the Abbot *de R....* to keep this Information secret and to come himself for those Writings, or send a Person for them, on whose Fidelity he could have an absolute Dependence.

The bad State of his Health not permitting him to go himself, he charged me with this Commission after many times representing to me the great Importance of it.

‘ You (said he to me) are more concerned
‘ in the Recovery of these Papers than I
‘ am. The Estates will probably soon be
‘ yours : but if you had no interest in them,
‘ I think well enough of you to believe
‘ that

‘ that you share my Resentment, and are
‘ eager to revenge the Injuries I have re-
‘ ceived.’

After giving me some other necessary In-
structions, it was resolved that I should
take the Title of Marquis *de Longaunois*,
that my Business in the Abbey might not
be suspected, Madam *de Luffan* having se-
veral Relations there.

I set out accompanied only by an old Ser-
vant of my Father's, and my own Valet
de Chambre : my Journey proved success-
ful : I found in the Archives of the Abbey
of R.... the Writings which proved in-
contestably the Entail.

I wrote to my Father, and gave him an
Account of all that I had done : and as I
was only at a small Distance from *Beg-
nieres*, I desired he would permit me to
stay there during the Season for drinking
the Waters. My Father was so pleased with
the Success of my Journey, that he readily
complied with my Request.

I still appeared under the borrowed Title
of the Marquis *de Longaunois*. I had too
inconsiderable an Equipage to support the
Grandeur of that of *Comminge*. The Day
after my Arrival I went to the Fountain : in
these Places Ceremony is laid aside, and an
easy polite Freedom better supplies its Place.

From

From the first Day of my Appearance at the Baths, I was admitted into all Parties of Pleasure, and introduced at the House of the Marquis *de la Vallete*, who that Day gave a grand Entertainment to the Ladies.

I found some of them already come whom I had seen at the Fountain, and said some tender Things to them as I then thought my self obliged to do to all Women. I was engaged in a particular Conversation with one of them, when a Lady of good Presence entered the Room, followed by a Girl of surprising Beauty : her Charms fixed my Attention immediately, her graceful Modesty won my Esteem, I loved her from that Moment, and that Moment decided the Destiny of my whole Life : insensibly my former Gaiety vanished, I could do nothing but gaze on her, and follow her every where : she perceived it, and blushed. A Walk was proposed, and I had the good Fortune to lead her. We were at a sufficient Distance from the rest of the Company to give me an Opportunity of talking to her upon a Subject by which my whole Thoughts were engrossed : but I who a few Moments before was not able to remove my Eyes from her Face, had now when we were alone not Courage enough to look upon her. Till then I had always talked of Love to Women for whom I felt nothing but Indifference ; but as soon as my
Heart

Heart was really subdued, I found it impossible to speak.

We rejoined the Company without having uttered a single Word to each other. The Ladies were conducted to their Lodgings, and I returned home, where I shut my self up in my Apartment. In the Disposition my Mind was then in, Solitude was most agreeable. I felt a certain Kind of Joy mixed with Pain, which I believe always accompanies a beginning Passion: mine had rendered me so timid, that I durst not endeavour to know the Name of her I loved. I was apprehensive, my Curiosity would betray the Secret of my Heart: but how did it sink within me when I learned that it was the Daughter of the Marquis of *Luffan*, who had charmed me. All the Obstacles, that opposed my Happiness, rose instantly to my Mind. But the Fear, that *Adelaida* (so was that lovely Girl called) had been early taught to hate my Name, was what most alarmed me. I thought myself fortunate in having assumed another, and fondly hoped that she would know my Passion for her, before she could be prejudiced against me, and that when she knew who I was, she would at least be induced to pity me.

I therefore determined to conceal my true Name as long as possible, and in the mean Time to use every Method to please her :
but

but I was too much in Love to employ any other than that of loving. I followed her wherever she went, I ardently wished for an Opportunity of speaking to her in private; and when that so much desired Opportunity offered itself, I had not Power to take Advantage of it. The Fear of forfeiting a thousand little Freedoms, which I now enjoyed, restrained me: but my greatest Fear was that of offending her.

This was my Situation when one Evening, as the Company was walking in little separate Parties, *Adelaida* dropt a Bracelet off her Arm to which her Picture was fastened. The *Chevalier de Saint Oden*, who led her, eagerly stooped to take it up, and after gazing on it a Moment put it into his Pocket. *Adelaida* at first asked for it mildly; but he obstinately refusing to return it, she expressed great resentment at a behaviour which argued so little Respect for her. The *Chevalier* was handsome, some little Successes with the Fair, had made him vain and presuming. Without being disconcerted at *Adelaida's* Anger.

‘Why, Mademoiselle, (said he) would
 ‘you deprive me of a Good which I
 ‘owe only to chance? I flatter myself (con-
 ‘tinued he lowering his Voice) that when
 ‘you know the Sentiments you have in-
 ‘spired me with, you will suffer me to
 ‘keep what that has presented me.’ Say-
 ing

ing this he bowed profoundly low, and, without waiting for her Answer, retired.

I happened not to be with her then. The Marchioness *de la Valette* and I were talking at a little distance: but although I quitted her as seldom as possible, yet my Attention was always fixed upon her. I never lost a Look, a Word, or Action of her's, and however particularly engaged, I never failed in any of those Affiduities, which others practise to please, but which the Excess of my passion made me find inconceivable Pleasure in performing.

Hearing her speak with unusual Emotion, I approached her, she was giving her Mother an Account of what had happened. Madam *de Luffan* was as much offended at the Chevalier's Behaviour as her Daughter. I was silent, I even continued my Walk with the Ladies. When they retired I sent a Message to the Chevalier, he was at home, and in Consequence of my desiring him to meet me, he came instantly to the Place appointed.

'I cannot persuade myself (said I approaching him) that what has happened during our Walk to Day, is more than a meer Pleasantry: you are too gallant and well bred to keep a Lady's Picture contrary to her Inclination.'

'I know

' I know not (answered he warmly) what
 ' Interest you take in my keeping or re-
 ' storing it. But I know that I neither
 ' need, nor will accept of your Advice.
 ' Then (replied I claping my Hand on
 ' my Sword) I will force you to receive it
 ' in this Manner.'

The Chevalier was brave, he eagerly
 answered my Defiance, we fought for some
 time with equal Success: but he was not
 animated like me with the Desire of serving
 what I loved. He wounded me slightly
 in two Places: but I gave him two large
 Wounds, and obliged him both to ask his
 Life, and to resign the Picture. After I
 had assisted him to rise and had conducted
 him to the nearest House, I retired to
 my own Lodgings, where as soon as the
 Wounds I had received were drest, I set my-
 self to contemplate that lovely Picture,
 and kissed it a thousand, and a thousand
 times.

I had a Genius for Painting which I had
 taken some Pains to cultivate: yet I was
 far from being a Master in the Art. But
 what will not Love accomplish? I undertook
 to copy this Portrait. I spent two Days
 in this Employment. Delightful task! I
 succeeded so well, that even a very discern-
 ing Eye might have mistaken mine for the
 Original. This inspired me with the Thought
 of substituting one for the other, by which
 contri-

contrivance I should have the Advantage of keeping that which had belonged to *Adelaida*, and she without knowing it, would always bear my Work about her.

These trifles to one who truly loves, are matters of great Importance, and my Heart knew how to set the full Value on them.

After I had fastened the Picture I had painted to the Ribbon in such a Manner that my cheat could not be discovered, I presented it to *Adelaida*. *Madam de Luffan* expressed herself highly obliged to me. *Adelaida* said little, she seemed embarrassed, but in the Midst of that Embarrassment I thought I discovered that she was pleased at having received this little Obligation from me, and that Thought gave me a real Transport.

I have in my Life experienced some of those happy Moments, and had my Misfortunes been only common ones, I should not have believed them too dearly purchased.

After this little Adventure I stood extremely well in the Esteem of *Madam de Luffan*. I was always at her Lodgings, I saw *Adelaida* every Hour in the Day, and although I did not speak to her of my Passion, yet I was sure she knew it: and I had Reason to believe she did not hate me. Hearts as sensible as ours were, quickly under-

derstand each other : to them every Thing is Expression.

I had lived two Months in this Manner, when I received a Letter from my Father, in which he commanded me to return immediately. This Command was to me like the stroke of a Thunder-bolt : my whole Soul had been engrossed with the Pleasure of seeing, and loving *Adelaida*. The Idea of leaving her was wholly new to me. The Horror of parting from her, the consequences of the Law-suit between our Families rose to my Thoughts with every Aggravation to distract me. I passed the Night in the utmost Agitation, and after having formed a thousand different Prospects, all equally fruitless and impracticable, it came suddenly into my Mind to burn the Writings which were still in my Possession, those now hated Writings that proved our Claim to the Estates of the Family of *Lussan*. I was astonished that I had not hit upon this Expedient sooner, since it was the most effectual Method I could take to put an End to a Suit the Consequences of which I had so much dreaded. It was not impossible but my Father, who had proceeded very far, might be induced to terminate the Affair amicably by my Marriage with *Adelaida* : but altho' there should be no Foundation for so pleasing a Hope, yet I could not consent to furnish Arms against what I loved. I reproached myself for having so long kept Papers in my Posses-

Possession, which ought to have been sooner sacrificed to my Tenderness. The Reflection of the Injury I did my Father could not stop me a Moment from the Execution of this Design. His estates were entailed upon me, and I inherited one left me by my Mother's Brother which I could resign to him to procure his Pardon, and which was much more considerable than that I was the Cause of his losing.

There needed no more Arguments to convince a Man in Love, and already determined. I went instantly to my Closet for the little Box which contained those Papers. Never had I in my whole Life experienced so happy a Moment, as that in which I committed them to the Flames. I was transported into Rapture at the Thoughts of so effectually serving the Object of my Passion.

‘ If she loves me (said I) she shall one Day know the Sacrifice I have made for her: but if I am not so happy as to touch her Heart, she shall always remain in Ignorance of it. Why should I make her sensible of an Obligation she would be sorry to own to me? I would have *Adelaida* love me, but I would not have her think herself indebted to me.’

I confess however, that after this Action, I found myself emboldened to declare my Sentiments

timents to her, and the Freedom, with which I visited at her Mother's, gave me an Opportunity that very Day.

' I am going to leave you, charming
' *Adelaida*, (said I) will you have the Good-
' nefs to think sometimes of a Man, whose
' Happiness, or whose Misery you only
' can make?' I had not power to go on,
she seemed alarmed, confused, I thought
also that I saw Grief in her Eyes.

' You have heard me (resumed I trem-
' bling) give me some Answer, I implore it
' of your Compassion, speak one Word to
' me.'

' What would you have me say to you ?
' (replied she with visible Emotion) I ought
' not to have heard you, and I ought less
' to answer you.'

Scarce did she give herself Time to pronounce these few Words, she left me so suddenly. I staid the rest of the Day there, but I found it impossible again to speak to her alone. She avoided me carefully. She had an Air of Perplexity and Confusion: how lovely did she appear to me with that perplexed Air, and that sweet innocent Confusion: my Respect for her was equal to my Love, I could not look on her without trembling. I dreaded lest my Presump-
tion

tion had made her repent of her Goodness towards me.

I should have longer observed a Conduct so conformable to my Respect for her, and to the Delicacy of my own Sentiments, if the Necessity I was under of leaving her, had not forced me to speak: I was willing to tell *Adelaida* my true Name before I went away: but I dreaded this Declaration even more than my former.

‘ I perceive you avoid me, Madam.
 ‘ (said I to her) Alas! what will you do
 ‘ when you know all my Crimes, or rather
 ‘ my Misfortunes? I have imposed upon you
 ‘ by a false Name: I am not the Person
 ‘ you think me: I am (pursued I trembling
 ‘ with the violence of my Apprehensions) I
 ‘ am the Son of the Count *de Comminge*.’

‘ The Son of the Count *de Comminge*,
 ‘ (cried *Adelaida* with Astonishment and
 ‘ Grief in her Face) our Enemy, our Per-
 ‘ secutor. Do not you and your Father urge
 ‘ the Ruin of mine?’

‘ Oh! do not wound me with so cruel
 ‘ a Thought, (interrupted I, Tears in spite
 ‘ of myself streaming from my Eyes.) In
 ‘ me, charming *Adelaida*, you behold a Lo-
 ‘ ver ready to sacrifice all for you; my
 ‘ Father will never injure yours, my Love
 ‘ secures him in your Interest.’

‘ But, why, (replied *Adelaida*, recovering from her Surprise) why have you deceived me? Why did you conceal your true Name? Had I known it (pursued she, softly sighing) it would have warned me to fly from you.’

‘ Oh! do not, Madam, (said I taking her Hand which I forcibly kissed) do not repent of your Goodness towards me.’

‘ Leave me, (said she withdrawing her Hand) the more I see you, the more inevitable I render those Misfortunes I too justly apprehend.’

The latent Meaning of these Words filled me with a Transport that suffered nothing but Hope to appear. I flattered myself that I should be able to render my Father favourable to my Passion. This Belief so wholly possessed me, that I thought every one should think as I did. I spoke to *Adelaida* of my Projects like one who is secure of Success.

‘ I know not (said she to me with a melancholy Air) why my Heart refuses to yield to the Hopes you endeavour to inspire. I foresee nothing but Misery in the course of this Affair. Yet I find a Pleasure in feeling what I do for you. I have not hid my Sentiments from you, I am willing you should know them, but remember
‘ that

‘ that if there is a necessity for it, I am capable of sacrificing them to my Duty.’

I had several Conversations with *Adelaida* before my Departure, and always found new Cause to congratulate myself upon my good Fortune. The Pleasure of loving and knowing that I was beloved, filled my whole Heart; no Suspicion, no Fear for the future could disturb the tender Softness of our Interviews. We were secure of each other’s Affection, because Esteem was the Basis of it, and this Certainty far from diminishing the Ardour of our Passion, added to it all the Sweetness of Hope, and all the Charms of Confidence.

‘ I should die with grief, (said she to me) if I bring upon you the Displeasure of your Father. I would have you love me, but, Oh! I would rather have you happy.’

I parted from her at length, full of the most tender and most ardent Passion that ever Man felt, and my whole Soul intent upon the Design of rendering my Father favourable to it.

In the mean Time he was informed of every Thing that had passed at the Baths. The Servant whom he had put about me, had secret Orders to observe my Conduct. He had left him ignorant of nothing, neither

of my Love, nor my Quarrel with the Chevalier *de Saint Oden*: unfortunately the Chevalier was the Son of one of my Father's most intimate Friends; this Circumstance, and the Danger to which he was reduced by his Wound, turned every Thing against me. The Servant, who had given him such exact Informations, represented me to be much happier than I was. He described Madam and Mademoiselle *de Luffan* as full of Artifice and Design, as having always known me for the Count *de Comminge*, and had spared no Pains to seduce me.

Thus prejudiced, my Father, naturally severe and passionate, treated me at my Return with great Harshness, he reproached me with my Passion as a Crime of the blackest Dye.

‘ You have been base enough (said he to me) to love my Enemies, and without reflecting what you owed either to me or yourself, you have entered into engagements with those I hate. And I know not (added he) whether you have not done something still more worthy of my Resentment!’

‘ Yes, Sir, (answered I throwing myself at his Feet) I am guilty I confess, but I am so in spite of myself: at this very Moment when I implore your Pardon, I feel that no Power on Earth can
‘ tear

' tear from my Heart that Passion which of-
 ' fends you, have Pity on me, and oh !
 ' suffer me to say it, have Pity on your-
 ' self : put an End to the Hatred which di-
 ' sturbs the Tranquility of your Life. The
 ' Tenderness which the Daughter of Mon-
 ' sieur *de Luffan*, and I felt for each other
 ' at first sight, seems a Warning from
 ' Heaven to you. Alas ! my dear Father,
 ' you have no other Child but me, would
 ' you make me miserable, and load me
 ' with Misfortunes so much the more in-
 ' supportable, as they will come from a
 ' Hand I must ever love and revere ? Suffer
 ' yourself (my dear Father) to be softened
 ' into Forgiveness of a Son who has of-
 ' fended you only by a Fatality for which
 ' he could not be answerable.'

My Father, who had suffered me to con-
 tinue kneeling during the whole time I was
 speaking to him, looked on me for a Mo-
 ment with mingled Scorn and Indignation.

At length, ' I have (said he) heard you
 ' with a Patience I am myself astonished
 ' at, and which I did not imagine I was
 ' capable of. I will still preserve Composure
 ' enough to tell you what is the only Fa-
 ' vour you are to expect from me. You
 ' must renounce your ill placed Passion, or
 ' the Quality of my Son : take your Choice,
 ' and this Instant deliver me the Writings

‘ you have in your Custody, you are no longer worthy of my Confidence.’

If my Father had suffered himself to be moved by my Supplications, the Demand he made of the Papers would have greatly distressed me: but his Harshness-gave me Courage.

‘ Those Writings, (said I rising) are no longer in my Possession, I have burned them: but the Estate I inherit of my Uncle’s shall be yours, instead of those they would have given you.’

I had scarce Time to pronounce these few Words, my Father mad with Rage, drew his Sword, and would doubtless have run me through, for I made not the least Effort to avoid him, if my Mother had not entered the Room that Instant, and thrown herself half dead with Terror betwixt us.

‘ Ah! what would you do, (said she gasping with the Violence of her Fears.) Is he not your Son?’ Then forcing me out of the Room, she ordered me to expect her in her own Apartment.

I waited there a long Time before she appeared: she came at length: I had no longer Rage, Exclamation and Menaces to combat, but a tender Mother who entered into all my Grievs, and intreated me with

with Tears to have Compassion on the Condition to which I had reduced her.

‘ What, my Son, (said she to me) shall
‘ a Mistress, and a Mistress whom you
‘ have known so short a Time, be preferred
‘ to your Mother? Alas! if your Happi-
‘ ness depended upon me, I would sacri-
‘ fice every Thing to secure it; but you
‘ have a Father who will be obeyed. He
‘ is upon the Point of taking the most vio-
‘ lent Resolutions against you. Oh! my
‘ Son, if you would not make me miserable,
‘ suppress a Passion that will render us all
‘ unhappy.’

I remained some Moments silent, how difficult was it to resist such a Plea, so tenderly urged by a Mother, for whom I had the highest filial Affection: but Love was still more powerful.

‘ I would die (said I) rather than dis-
‘ please you. And I will die if you have
‘ not Pity on me. What can I do? It is
‘ easier for me to take away my own Life
‘ than forget *Adelaida*. Shall I be perju-
‘ red and violate the Vows I have made
‘ to her? Vows which have engaged her
‘ early Affections. Shall I abandon her
‘ then when I know I have gained her
‘ Heart? Oh! my dear Mother, do not
‘ wish your Son to become the basest of
‘ Men.’

I then related to her all that had past between us.

‘ She loves you, (said I) and you, I am sure will not be able to help loving her. She has your Sweetness, your Candor, your Generosity. How is it possible for me to cease to love her?’

‘ But what do you propose by indulging this Passion? said my Mother: your Father is resolved to have you marry another, and commands you to retire into the Country till every Thing is settled. It is absolutely necessary that you should appear willing to obey him, unless you mean to be my Death. He expects you will depart to morrow under the Conduct of a Person in whom he has great Confidence. Absence will do more for you than you can yet imagine; but be that as it will, do not irritate Monsieur *de Comminge* still more by your Refusal: ask for time, and I will do every Thing in my Power, to accomplish your Wishes. Your Father’s Anger cannot last always. He will relent and you may be yet happy, but you have been highly to blame in burning the Writings. He is persuaded that you sacrificed them to Madam *de Luffan* who ordered her Daughter to require that Proof of your Love.’

‘ Oh!

‘ Oh ! heavens ! (cried I) is it possible
‘ that my Father can be so unjust ? Both Ma-
‘ dam *de Luffan* and *Adelaida* are ignorant
‘ of what I have done, and I am very sure
‘ had they suspected my Intention, they
‘ would have used all their Power over me
‘ to have prevented it.’

My Mother and I afterwards took Measures to convey Letters to each other ; and encouraged by her Indulgence, I durst presume to beg she would transmit to me those of *Adelaida*, who was soon to be at *Bordeaux*. My Mother had the Goodness to promise she would gratify me, but at the same Time insisted, that if I found *Adelaida* had altered her Sentiments, I should submit to what my Father required of me. We spent great Part of the Night in this Conversation, and as soon as Day appeared my Conductor came to inform me that it was Time to get on Horse-back.

The Estate, where I was to pass the Time of my Banishment, lay in the Mountains, some Leagues from *Bagnieres*, so that we took the same Road I had so lately past through. The Second Day of our Journey we came early in the Evening to the Village where we were to lye. While Supper was preparing I went to take a Walk along the great Road, and at a Distance saw an Equipage which drove very fast, and when it came within a few Paces
of

of me overturned. My Heart by its throbbing acquainted me with the Part I had in this Accident ; I eagerly flew towards the Coach, two Men on Horse-back who attended it, alighted and joined me to assist those who were within : it will be easily guessed that those Persons were *Adelaida* and her Mother. In Effect it was they. *Adelaida* was very much hurt in one of her Feet, but her Joy at seeing me seemed to leave her no Sense of her Pain.

What Pleasure did I taste that happy Moment ! after so many Afflictions, and at the Distance of so many Years, it is still present to my Remembrance. *Adelaida* not being able to walk, I took her in my Arms to carry her to the Inn, her charming Arms were thrown round my Neck, and one of her Hands touched my Mouth. I was in a Transport that scarce suffered me to breathe. *Adelaida* observed it, her Delicacy was alarmed, she made a Motion to disengage herself from my Arms. Alas ! how little did she know the Excess of my Love, I was too much transported with my present Happiness to think there was any beyond it.

‘ Set me down, (said she to me in a low and trembling Voice) I believe I am able to walk.’

‘ What

‘ What (replied I) are you so cruel as
 ‘ to envy me the only good Fortune I shall
 ‘ perhaps ever enjoy.’ I prest her tenderly
 to my Bosom as I pronounced these Words.
Adelaida was silent, and a false Step which
 I made on Purpose, obliged her to resume
 her first Attitude.

The Inn was at so little Distance, that
 I was soon forced to part with my beauteous
 Burden. I carried her into a Room and
 laid her on a Bed, while their Attendants
 did the same by her Mother who was much
 more hurt than *Adelaida*. Every one being
 busy about *Madam de Luffan*, I had time to
 acquaint *Adelaida* with part of what had passed
 between my Father and me : I suppressed the
 Article of the burnt Writings. I knew
 not whether I most wished that she should
 be ignorant of it, or know it from another
 Person. It was in some Degree imposing
 upon her the Necessity of loving me, and
 I was desirous of owing all to her own
 Heart. I durst not describe my Father to
 her such as he really was. *Adelaida* was
 strictly virtuous, and I was sensible, that,
 to resign herself to the Inclination she felt
 for me, it was necessary that she should
 hope we might be one Day united. I
 seemed to have great Dependance upon
 my Mother’s Tenderness for me, and the
 favourable Dispositions she was in towards
 us ; I intreated *Adelaida* to see her.

‘ Speak

‘ Speak to my Mother, (said she) she
 ‘ knows your Sentiments. I have acknow-
 ‘ ledged mine to her. I found that her
 ‘ Authority was necessary to give me
 ‘ Strength to combat them, if I should be
 ‘ obliged to it, or to justify me for re-
 ‘ signing my self up to them without Scruple.
 ‘ She will use her utmost Endeavours to
 ‘ prevail upon my Father, to propose an
 ‘ Accommodation, and to engage the Inter-
 ‘ position of our common Relations for
 ‘ that Purpose.’

The Tranquility with which *Adelaida*
 rested upon these Hopes, made me feel my
 Misfortune more sensibly.

‘ What, if our Fathers should be inex-
 ‘ orable (said I to her pressing her hand,)
 ‘ will not you have Compassion on a mi-
 ‘ serable Wretch who adores you ?’

‘ I will do all that I can (answered she)
 ‘ to regulate my Inclinations by my Duty,
 ‘ but I feel that I shall be wretched, if that
 ‘ Duty is against you.’

The Persons who had been employed
 about *Madam de Luffan* then approaching
 her Daughter, our Discourse was interrupted.
 I went to the Bed-side of the Mother ; she
 received me kindly and assured me, she
 would use every Method in her Power to
 reconcile our Families. I then went out of
 their

their Chamber to leave them at Liberty to take some Repose. My Conductor, who waited for me in my own, had made no Enquiry about these new Guests, so that I had an Opportunity of being a few Moments with *Adelaida* before I proceeded on my Journey.

I entered her Chamber in a Condition easier to be imagined than described. I dreaded that this was the last Time I should see her. I approached the Mother first. My Grief pleaded for me. And she was so moved with it that she expressed herself in still kinder Terms, than she had done the Evening before. *Adelaida* was at another End of the Room, I went to her trembling.

‘ I leave you, my dear *Adelaida*,’ said I. Two or three Times I repeated the same Words: my Tears which I could not restrain, spoke the Rest. She wept likewise.

‘ I shew you my whole Heart, (said she)
‘ but I do not wish to disguise it from you,
‘ you deserve my Tenderness. I know
‘ not what will be our Fate, but I am resolved, that my Parents shall dispose of
‘ mine.’

‘ And why (replied I) should we subject ourselves to the Tyranny of our Parents? Let us leave them to hate each
‘ other,

‘ other, if they will do it, and let us fly to
 ‘ some distant Corner of the World, and
 ‘ be happy in our mutual Tenderness, which
 ‘ we may make a superiour Duty to that
 ‘ we owe them.’

‘ Never let me have such a proposal from
 ‘ you again, (said she) give me not Cause
 ‘ to repent of the Sentiments I have enter-
 ‘ tained for you. My Love may make me
 ‘ unhappy: but it shall never make me
 ‘ criminal. Adieu, (added she giving me
 ‘ her Hand) it is by our Constancy and
 ‘ Virtue that we ought to endeavour to
 ‘ triumph over our Misfortunes, but what-
 ‘ ever happens, let us resolve to do no-
 ‘ thing which may lessen our Esteem for
 ‘ each other.’

While she spoke, I kissed the dear
 Hand she had given me, I bathed it with
 my Tears. ‘ I must always love you, (re-
 ‘ plied I.) Death, if I cannot be yours,
 ‘ will free me from my Misery.’

My Heart was so prest with Anguish that
 I could with Difficulty utter those few Words.
 I hastily quitted the Room, and mounting
 my Horse arrived at the Place where we
 were to dine without having one Moment
 ceased to weep. I gave free Course to my
 Tears, I found a kind of Sweetness in thus
 indulging my Grief. When the Heart is
 truly affected, it takes Pleasure in every
 Thing

Thing that discovers to itself its own Sensibility.

The remainder of our Journey passed as the Beginning : I had scarce uttered a Word during the whole Time. On the third Day we arrived at a Castle built near the *Pyrenees*. Nothing was to be seen about it, but Pines and Cyprus-Trees, steep Rocks, and horrid Precipices, and nothing heard but the Noise of Torrents rushing with Violence down those frightful Declivities.

This savage Dwelling pleased me, because it soothed my Melancholly. I passed whole Days in the Woods, and when I returned, unloaded my sad Heart in Letters to my beloved *Adelaida*. This was my only Employment, and my only Pleasure.

I will give them to her one Day, thought I, she shall see by them how I have past the Time in her Absence. I sometimes received Letters from my Mother, in one of which she gave me Hope. Alas ! that was the only happy Moment I ever enjoyed : she informed me that all our Relations were labouring to reconcile our Families, and that there was Room to believe they would succeed.

After this I received no more Letters for six Weeks. How tedious were those Days of Doubting and Anxiety. Every Morning
I went

I went into the Road through which the Messengers past, and never returned till it was late in the Evening : lingering till Hope and Expectation had nothing left to feed upon, and always returned more wretched, than when I first set out.

At length I saw a Man at a Distance riding towards the Castle, I did not doubt but he was a Messenger to me, and instead of that eager Impatience I had felt a Moment before I was now seized with Apprehension and Dread. I durst not advance to meet him, something which I could not account for restrained me. Uncertainty which had hitherto appeared so tormenting, seemed now a Good which I feared to lose.

My Heart did not deceive me. This Man brought me Letters from my Mother, in which she informed me, that my Father would listen to no Proposals for an Accommodation, and, to complete my Miseries, had resolved upon a Marriage between me and a Daughter of the House of *Foix* : that the Nuptials were to be celebrated in the Castle where I then was, and that my Father would in a few Days come himself to prepare me for what he desired of me.

You will easily judge, I did not balance a Moment about the Resolution I was to take.

take. I waited for my Father's Arrival with Tranquility enough. My Grief was soothed by the Reflection, that I was able to make another sacrifice to *Adelaida*. I was convinced she loved me: I loved her too much to doubt it. True Love is always full of Confidence.

My Mother, who had so many Reasons for wishing to see me disengaged from *Adelaida*, had never in any of her Letters given me the least Cause to suspect she was changed, this compleated my Security; how greatly did the Constancy of my *Adelaida* heighten the Ardor of my Passion! during the three Days which elapsed before the Arrival of my Father, my Imagination was wholly employed on the new Proof I was shortly to give *Adelaida* of my Passion: this Idea notwithstanding my miserable Situation gave me Sensations little different from Joy.

The Meeting between my Father and me was on my Side full of Respect, but Coldness and Reserve. On his, of Haughtiness and Indifference.

‘ I have given you Leisure (said he to me)
‘ to repent of your Folly, and I am now
‘ come to give you the Means to make me
‘ forget it: return this Instance of my In-
‘ dulgence, with Obedience, and prepare to
‘ receive as you ought, the Count of *Foix*,
‘ and

‘ and Mademoiselle *de Foix* his Daughter,
 ‘ for whom I have destined you. The Mar-
 ‘ riage shall be solemnised here, they will
 ‘ arrive to morrow with your Mother, I
 ‘ came before them only to give the necessa-
 ‘ ry Orders for their Reception.’

‘ I am sorry, sir, (replied I calmly) that I
 ‘ cannot comply with your wishes, I have
 ‘ too much Honour to marry a Person I can
 ‘ never love, therefore I intreat you will
 ‘ permit me to leave this Place directly.
 ‘ Mademoiselle *de Foix*, however aimable
 ‘ she may be, cannot alter my Resolution,
 ‘ and if I see her, the Affront I shall give her
 ‘ by refusing her Hand, will be more poig-
 ‘ nant to her.’

‘ No (interrupted my Father in a Rage)
 ‘ thou shalt not see her, nor shalt thou be
 ‘ allowed to see the Day, I will shut thee
 ‘ up in a Dungeon, a fitter Habitation ----
 ‘ I swear by Heaven, that thou shalt never
 ‘ be delivered from thy Confinement till I
 ‘ am convinced thy Repentance is sincere,
 ‘ and thy Change certain. I will punish
 ‘ thee for thy Disobedience every way that
 ‘ is in my Power, I will deprive thee of my
 ‘ Estate and settle it upon Mademoiselle *de*
 ‘ *Foix*, to fulfill in some Degree the Pro-
 ‘ mise I have given her.’

I made no Opposition to my Father's
 tyrannical Design, I suffered myself to be
 con-

conducted to an old Tower, where I was confined in a Place at the Bottom of it, which received no Light but from a little grated Window which looked into one of the Courts of the Castle. My Father gave Orders that Food should be brought me twice a Day, but that I should not be suffered to see any Person whatever.

I passed the first Days of my Confinement with Tranquility enough, and even with some kind of Pleasure : what I had so lately done for *Adelaida*, employed all my Thoughts, and left no Room for Reflexion upon the Horrors of my Condition ; but when this Sentiment began to lose its Force, I resigned myself up to Despair, at being thus doomed to an Absence of which I knew not the End : my busy Imagination tortured me with the Apprehension of a thousand other Evils, *Adelaida* might be forced to enter into another Engagement, I fancied her surrounded with Rivals all assiduous to please, while I had nothing to plead for me but my Miseries ; but to a Mind so generous as *Adelaida's*, was not this sufficient ? I reproached myself for entertaining the least doubt : I asked her Pardon for it, as for a Crime, and my Heart gathered new Strength from the Confidence I had in her Fidelity.

My Mother found Means to convey a Letter to my Hands, in which she exhorted me to submit to my Father, whose Rage
against

against me seemed to increase every Day. She added, that she suffered a great deal herself, that her Endeavours to procure a Reconciliation between him and the Family of *Luffan*, had made him suspect that she acted in concert with me.

I was greatly afflicted with the Uneasiness my Mother suffered on my Account, but as I could not accuse myself of having voluntarily caused her any Part of it, all I could do was to lament her Situation.

One Day when I was as usual wholly taken up with Reflections on my unhappy Fate, Something fell through the Window into my Dungeon, which immediately roused my Attention. I saw a Letter lye on the Floor, I seized it with trembling Haste: but what became of me when I read the Contents, they were as follows:

‘ Your Father’s Rage has instructed me
 ‘ what I ought to do. I know all that your
 ‘ Generosity concealed from me: I know
 ‘ the terrible Situation you are in, and I
 ‘ know but one Method to extricate you
 ‘ from it, which will perhaps make you
 ‘ more miserable, but I shall be so as well
 ‘ as you, and that Thought will give me
 ‘ Resolution to do what is required of me.
 ‘ Our cruel Parents, to make it impossible
 ‘ for me to be yours, insist upon my marry-
 ‘ ing another. This is the Price your Fa-
 ‘ ther

‘ther has set upon your Liberty, it will
‘perhaps cost me my Life, my Quiet it too
‘surely will to pay it, but I am determin’d,
‘your Sufferings and your Prison are at pre-
‘sent all that I can think of, in a few Days
‘I shall be the Wife of the Marquis de Be-
‘navides, his Character is sufficient to ac-
‘quaint me with all I have to suffer from
‘him; but this sort of Fidelity I owe you
‘at least, that in the Engagement I enter,
‘I should find nothing but Misery. May
‘you on the contrary be happy, your good
‘Fortune will be my Consolation: I am
‘sensible I ought not to tell you this, if
‘I was truly generous I should suffer you
‘to be ignorant of the Part you have in my
‘Marriage, I should leave you in doubt of
‘my Constancy. I had formed a Design
‘to do so, but I was not able to execute
‘it, in my sad Situation; I have need of
‘being supported with the Thought that
‘the Remembrance of me, will not be hate-
‘ful to you. Alas, soon, very soon it will
‘not be permitted me to preserve yours ----
‘I must forget you --- at least I must en-
‘deavour so to do. Of all my Miseries this
‘is what I am most sensible of: you will
‘increase it, if you do not carefully avoid
‘all Opportunities of seeing and speaking
‘to me. Reflect that you owe me this
‘Mark of your Esteem, and oh reflect how
‘dear that Esteem will be to me, since of
‘all those Sentiments you have profess’d for
VOL. II. H ‘ me

‘ me, it is the only one that I am allowed
 ‘ to require of you.

Of this fatal Letter, which I have related at length, I was able to read no more than to these Words: ‘ Our cruel Fathers to
 ‘ make it impossible for me to be yours, in-
 ‘ sist upon my marrying another.’ Pierced to the Heart with this cruel, this unexpected Misfortune, I sunk upon the Mattrafs which composed my Bed, and lay there for several Hours without Sense or Motion, and probably might never have recovered, but for the Assistance of the Person who brought me my Provisions. If he was alarmed at the Condition in which he found me, he was much more so at the Excess of my Despair, when my Senses returned. The Letter which I had held fast in my Hand, during my Swoon, and which I at last read quite through, was wet with my Tears, and I spoke and acted Extravagancies, which made him apprehensive for my Reason.

This Man, who till then had been inaccessible to Pity, was melted all on a sudden: he blamed my Father for his cruel Treatment of me, he reproved himself for having executed his Orders, he asked my Pardon on his Knees. His Repentance inspired me with the Thought of proposing to him, to let me quit my Prison for eight Days only, promising him that at the Expiration of that
 Time,

Time, I would return and put myself into his Hands. I added every thing that I could think of, to oblige him to consent: moved at the State he saw me in, excited by his own Interest, and by the Fear that I should one Day take Vengeance upon him for being the Instrument of my Father's Cruelty, he agreed to what I desired, upon the Condition I had myself proposed to him.

I would have set out that Moment from the Castle, but there was a Necessity for his going to seek for Horses, and when he returned he informed me that we could not get any 'till the next Day. My Design was to go to *Adelaida*, to tell her all my Grief and Despair, and to kill myself before her Eyes, if she persisted in her Resolution. To execute this Project, it was necessary that I should arrive before her fatal Marriage, and every Moment's Delay seemed to me an Age of Misery. I read over her Letter an hundred Times, as if I had expected to find still something more in it; I examined the Date over and over, I flattered myself that the Time might have been prolonged.

' She will at least make an Effort (said I)
 ' she will seize all Pretences to defer it: but
 ' why should I flatter myself with so vain a
 ' Hope (resumed I) *Adelaida* sacrificing her-
 ' self for my Liberty, will hasten the dread-
 ' ful Moment. Alas! can she believe that
 ' Liberty without her can be a Blessing to
 H 2 ' me?

' me? I shall every where find this Prison
 ' she delivers me from, she has never known
 ' my Heart, she judges of me by other Men.
 ' It is to that I owe my Ruin: I am still
 ' more miserable than I believe myself,
 ' since I have not the Consolation to think
 ' that she knows how much I love her.'

I past the whole Night in making these
 Complaints, the most tedious Night I had
 ever known, even in that Place of Misery.
 At length the Day appeared, I mounted on
 Horseback with my Conductor, we travelled
 the whole Day without stopping a Moment,
 when towards the Evening I perceived my
 Mother in a Chariot which took the Road
 towards the Castle. She knew me imme-
 diately, and after having expressed her Sur-
 prize at meeting me, she obliged me to come
 into the Chariot to her. I durst not ask her
 the Occasion of her Journey, in the Situa-
 tion I was in, I feared every thing, and my
 Fear was but too well founded.

' I come my Son (said she) by your Fa-
 ' ther's Permission to release you from your
 ' Confinement.'

' Ah! (cried I) then *Adelaida* is marri-
 ' ed.' My Mother answered only by Si-
 lence: my Misfortune, which was then
 without Remedy, presented itself to my
 Mind with all its horrid Aggravations. I
 fell into a kind of Stupidity, and by the
 Force

Force of Grief, I seemed to have lost the Sense of it.

However my Body soon sunk under the Weakness of my Mind : I was seized in the Coach with a Shivering like the cold Fit of an Ague. As soon as we arrived at the Castle, my Mother caused me to be put to Bed, I lay two Days without speaking or taking any Nourishment, all the Symptoms of a violent Fever appeared, and on the Fourth, the Physicians despaired of my Life. My Mother, who never left me, was inconceivably afflicted, her Tears, her Prayers, and the Name of *Adelaida*, in which she conjured me to live, made me resolve not to obstruct the Endeavours of the Physicians to save me. After suffering fifteen Days the Agonies of a most violent Fever, I began, tho' by slow Degrees, to recover : the first thing I did, when I was able to attend to any thing, was to seek for the Letter I had received from *Adelaida*. My Mother, who had taken it from me, for fear it should increase my Affliction, was obliged to restore it to me : after I had read it several times, I put it into a little silk Bag, and placed it on my Heart, where I had always kept her Picture, and whenever I was alone it was always my Employment to gaze upon that lovely Picture and to read that Letter.

My Mother, who was of a soft and tender Disposition, shared in my Grief: she likewise thought it best to yield to my first Transports, and leave it to Time to finish my Cure.

She permitted me to speak of *Adelaida*, and sometimes was the first to mention her to me, and perceiving that the only Thing which gave me Consolation, was the Thought of being loved by her, she told me that it was she herself who had determined *Adelaida* to marry.

‘ I ask your Pardon my dear Son (said she) for the Grief I have caused you, I did not imagine you would have felt her Loss so deeply: I trembled for your Health, and even your Life, while you continued under that cruel Confinement. I knew your Father’s inflexible Temper, and was convinced he would never set you at Liberty, while there was a Possibility of your marrying *Mademoiselle de Luffan*: I resolved to speak to that generous young Lady, I told her my Fears for your Health, she partook in them, she felt them perhaps with more Force even than I did. From that Moment I saw her use every Endeavour to hasten her Marriage, for her Father, justly irritated at the Proceedings of *Monsieur de Commings*, had long pressed her to marry: hitherto she had resisted

‘ sifted his Solicitations and even his Com-
‘ mands. I asked her which of those Per-
‘ sons who addressed her she would chuse.’

‘ It matters not which, (replied she) they
‘ are all equal to me, since I cannot be his
‘ to whom I have given my Heart.’

‘ Two Days after I had this Conversation
‘ with her, I learned that the Marquis *de Be-*
‘ *navides* was preferred to all his Rivals, every
‘ one was surprized at her Choice, and I as
‘ much as any other.

‘ *Benavides* has a disagreeable Person, his
‘ Understanding is mean, and his Temper ex-
‘ tremely bad: this last Circumstance made
‘ me tremble for poor *Adelaida*, I was resolved
‘ to tell her my Apprehensions, I went for
‘ that Purpose to the House of the Countess
‘ *de Garlande*, where we used to meet.

‘ I am prepared (said she) for Misery,
‘ but I must marry, and since I know it is
‘ the only Means of procuring your Son’s
‘ Liberty, I reproach myself every Moment
‘ that I delay this Sacrifice. Yet this Mar-
‘ riage which I consent to only for his Sake,
‘ will perhaps be the most cruel of his Mis-
‘ fortunes: I will at least convince him by
‘ my Choice, that his Interest was the sole
‘ Motive which engaged me to it. Pity me,
‘ dear Madam, I deserve your Pity, and
‘ by my Behaviour to Monsieur *Benavides*,

‘I will endeavour to render myself worthy
 ‘of your Esteem.’

My Mother afterwards told me that *Adelaida* was made acquainted by my Father himself, with my having burnt the Writings, he publickly upbraided her with it on the Day that he lost his Process. She confest to me (added my Mother) that she was more affected with your extreme Delicacy in concealing so generous an Action, than with the Action itself.

We past the Days in such Conversations, my Melancholly was excessive, yet, tho’ deprived of Hope, I found a kind of Sweetness in the Idea of my being still loved.

After a Stay of two Months, my Mother received Orders from my Father to return to him. He had expressed no Concern for my Illness, and his cruel Treatment of me had extinguished every Sentiment of Tenderness for him. My Mother pressed me to go with her, but I intreated her to consent to my staying in the Country, she yielded to my Reasons and left me.

I was now once more alone in the midst of my Woods, and found so much Sweetness in Solitude, that I would then have abandoned every Thing, and taken up my Habitation in some Hermit’s Cell, had I not
 been

been restrained by my Tendernefs for my Mother. I often resolved to endeavour to see *Adelaida*, but the Fear of displeasing her ftopt me. At length after long Irrefolution, I thought I might at leaft attempt to fee *Adelaida* without being feen by her.

Accordingly I resolved to fend a Perfon, in whom I could confide to *Bourdeaux*, to know where ſhe was, and for this Purpoſe I fixed upon a Man who had attended me from my Infancy: my Mother, during my Illnefs, had reſtored him to his Place about me, he had been with me at the Baths, he knew *Adelaida*, and when I mentioned my Deſign to him, he informed me that he had Friends in the Houſe of *Benavides*.

After having given him his Orders, which I repeated a thouſand Times, I cauſed him to ſet out from the Caſtle. When he arrived at *Bourdeaux*, he was informed that *Benavides* had carried his Lady a ſhort Time after their Marriage to an Eſtate which he had in *Biſcay*. *Saint Laurent*, for that was my Servant's Name, wrote to me to know what he was to do next. I ſent him Orders to go immediately into *Biſcay*, my Deſire of ſeeing *Adelaida*, was ſo much increaſed by the Hope I had conceived, that it was not poſſible for me to oppoſe it any longer.

Saint Laurent returned at the Expiration of six Weeks, which my Anxiety and Impatience had lengthened into Ages. He told me that after many fruitless Attempts, *Benavides* having had Occasion for an Architect, he had prevailed upon his Friend to present him to him in that Quality, that having acquired some Knowledge of the Art from an Uncle under whose Care he had been brought up, he made no scruple to undertake the Business *Benavides* employed him in.

‘ I believe (said he) that *Madam de Benavides* knew me, for she blushed when she first saw me.’ He then told me that she lived the most retired and melancholly Life imaginable, that her Husband hardly ever quitted her a Moment, and that it was said in the House he was excessively fond of her, but that he gave her no other Proof of it, than by his extreme Jealousy, which he carried so far, that even his Brother had not the Liberty of seeing her, but when he was present.

I asked my Servant some Questions about that Brother, he told me that he was a very amiable young Man, and that the World spoke as much in his Favour, as they did to the Disadvantage of *Benavides*, and that he appeared to be greatly attached to his Sister-in-law.

This

This Discourse made no Impression upon me at that Time, the unhappy Situation of *Madam de Benavides* and the Desire of seeing her, employed my whole Soul. *Saint Laurent* assured me he had taken proper Measures for introducing me into the House of *Benavides*,

‘ He has Occasion for a Painter (said he to me) to paint an Apartment, I promised to bring him a good one, and you must undertake this Business.’

Nothing now remained but to regulate our Departure, I wrote to my Mother, and told her I was going to pass some Time at the House of one of my Friends. This done I set out with *Saint Laurent* for *Biscay*; during our Journey, I was continually asking him Questions, concerning *Madam de Benavides*, I was desirous of knowing the slightest Particulars relating to her. *Saint Laurent* was not able to satisfy my Curiosity, he had but few Opportunities of seeing her, she was shut up in her own Apartment, with no other Company than a little Dog, of which she was extremely fond. This Article touched me particularly, I had presented her with that Dog, and I flattered myself that she loved it for my Sake. These little things which escape one in good Fortune, affect one sensibly in Misery: the Heart in the Need it has of Consolation, fastens upon every Thing which is likely to afford it.

Saint Laurent often mentioned to me the great Attachment of young *Benavides*, to his Sister-in-law, he added, that he often opposed the furious Sallies of his Brother's Temper, and, but for his good Offices, *Adelaida* would be still more miserable than she was. He earnestly intreated me to be contented with the Pleasure of seeing her, and to make no Attempt to speak to her.

‘ Not because it would endanger your
 ‘ Life (added he) that, I know, is too
 ‘ weak a Motive to restrain you : but be-
 ‘ cause she will suffer by any Imprudence
 ‘ you may be guilty of.’

The Liberty of seeing *Adelaida*, appeared to me so great a Blessing, that I was fully persuaded that alone would satisfy me, and I resolved within myself, and promised *Saint Laurent* to behave with the utmost Circumspection.

After a most tedious Journey, as my Impatience made it seem, we arrived at *Biscay*, and I was presented to *Benavides*, who set me to work immediately.

The supposed Architect and I were lodged in the same Apartment, and to him was committed the Care of overseeing the Workmen. I had been several Days at work before I saw *Madam de Benavides*, at length I perceived her one Evening from a Window in
 my

my own Room, going to walk in the Garden, she had only her little favourite Dog with her, her Dress was negligent, a kind of languishing Melancholly appeared in her Looks and Motions, and her fine Eyes seemed to dwell on the Objects around her without regarding them.

Oh, Heavens! what sweetly painful Emotions did my Soul feel at the Sight of her: I continued leaning on the Window the whole Time she staid in the Garden; it was dark when she returned, so that I could not distinguish her when she past by my Window, but my Heart knew it was her.

I saw her a second Time in the Chapel of the Castle, I placed myself in such a Manner that I could look at her the whole Time without being observed. She never once turned her Eyes upon me, I ought to have rejoiced at this Circumstance, since I well knew that if she discovered me, she would be obliged to go out of the Chapel, yet I was afflicted at it, and returned to my Chamber in greater Disquiet than when I left it. I had not yet formed any Design of making myself known to her, but I was sensible that I should not be able to resist doing it if any Opportunity offered.

The Sight of young *Benavides* gave me likewise some kind of Uneasiness, he often came to see me work; and notwithstanding the seeming Distance of our Rank, he behaved

behaved to me with an obliging Familiarity which ought to have excited my Esteem, yet it had no Effect upon me. His great Merit, and the Aimableness of his Person which I could not but be sensible of, withheld my Gratitude, I was afraid of a Rival in him, and a certain impassioned Sadness which I perceived in him, which was too like my own, not to proceed from the same Cause, gave me a Suspicion, which he soon confirmed.

After asking me one Day several Questions, relating to my Condition in Life.

‘ You are in Love (said he to me sighing imperceptibly to himself,) the Melancholy in which I perceive you plunged continually, persuades me that your Heart is not well, tell me the Truth, can I do any Thing for you? the Miserable in general have a Claim to my Compassion, but there is one sort of Grief which I pity more than any other.’

I believe I thanked *Don Gabriel* (that was his Name) with a very ill Grace, for the kind Offers he made to me. However I could not help owning to him that I was in Love. But I told him that Time only could produce any Change in the State of my Fortune.

‘ You

‘ You are not absolutely unhappy then
 ‘ (replied he) since you may hope for a
 ‘ Change, I know Persons who are much
 ‘ more to be pitied than you.’

When I was alone I reflected upon the Conversation that had passed between *Don Gabriel* and myself. I concluded that he was in Love, and that his charming Sister-in-Law was the Object of his Passion, his whole Behaviour which I examined with the utmost Attention convinced me I was not mistaken: I observed him always assiduous about *Adelaida*, he gazed on her with Eyes like mine, yet I was not jealous, my Esteem for *Adelaida* would not admit of such an injurious Sentiment, but I could not help fearing, that the Company of an agreeable Man who was continually rendering her Services that softened the Horrors of her present Situation, would make her reflections on me be greatly to my Disadvantage, whose Passion had been productive of nothing but Misfortunes to her.

I was full of these Thoughts when one Day I saw *Adelaida* enter the Room where I was painting, led by *Don Gabriel*.

‘ Why (said she) do you press me to
 ‘ come and look at the Ornaments of this
 ‘ Apartment? You know I have no Taste
 ‘ for these Things.’

‘ I hope

‘ I hope, Madam, (said I, looking earnestly upon her, and bowing low) that if you will deign to cast your Eyes upon what is here, you will find something not unworthy your Attention.’

Adelaida, struck with the Sound of my Voice, turned instantly towards me, I perceived she knew me, for she blushed and bent her Eyes on the Ground, and after pausing a Moment, she left the Room without giving me a Look, saying, that the Smell of the Paint was disagreeable to her.

I remained behind, terrified, confused and overwhelmed with Grief. *Adelaida* had not deigned to give me a second Look, she would not even shew that she was enough interested in my Disguise to express any Signs of Resentment at it.

What have I done (said I) I am indeed come hither contrary to her Commands, but if she still loved me she would pardon a Fault that proceeded from the Excess of my Passion for her.

I now concluded, that since *Adelaida* no longer loved me, she must of Necessity have bestowed her Heart upon another. This Idea filled me with a Grief so new and violent, that I thought I had never been truly miserable till then. *Saint-Laurent*, who came from Time to Time to see me,
entering

entering the Room that Moment, found me in an Agitation that made him tremble.

‘ What ails you, Monsieur, (said he to me) what has happened to you ?’

‘ I am undone, (replied I) *Adelaida* no longer loves me, she no longer loves me (repeated I) It is but too true. Alas ! I never had Reason to complain of my Fate till this cruel Moment, what Torments would I now endure to purchase this Blessing which I have lost ! This Blessing which I preferred to all Things and which in the Midst of my greatest Miseries filled my Heart with so soft a Joy.’

I continued a long Time to exclaim in this Manner, while *Saint-Laurent* in vain endeavoured to draw from me the Cause of my Grief. At length, I related to him what had happened. ‘ I see nothing in all this (said he) which ought to drive you to the Despair I see you in. *Madam de Benavides* is certainly offended at your rash Attempt. She was desirous of punishing you by appearing indifferent, and perhaps she was apprehensive of betraying herself if she had looked upon you.’

‘ No no (interrupted I) they who love have not such Command over themselves in those first Emotions, the Heart alone is listened to. I must see her (added I) I must

‘ must reproach her with her Change.
 ‘ Alas ! After giving herself to another,
 ‘ ought she to take away my Life by so
 ‘ cruel an Indifference ? Why did she
 ‘ not leave me in my Prison, there I should
 ‘ have been happy, had I been assured of
 ‘ her Love ?’

Saint-Laurent fearing that any one should
 see me in the Condition I was in, obliged
 me to retire to the Chamber where we both
 lay. I past the whole Night in tormenting
 myself, my Thoughts were at Strife with
 each others in one Moment, I condemned
 my Suspicions, and the next relapsed into
 them again. I thought it unjust to wish
 that *Adelaida* should preserve a Tenderness
 which rendered her miserable. In those
 Moments I reproached myself for loving her
 less than my own Satisfaction.

‘ Why should I wish to live ? (said I to
 ‘ *Saint-Laurent*) if she loves another, I
 ‘ will endeavour to speak to her only to
 ‘ bid her an eternal Adieu. She shall hear
 ‘ no Reproaches from my Mouth, my Grief
 ‘ which I cannot conceal from her, shall
 ‘ speak for me.’

When this Point was resolved upon, it
 was agreed that I should leave *Biscay* as
 soon as I should have an Interview with
 her, we then began to consider upon the
 necessary Means of procuring it. *Saint-*
Laurent

Laurent told me that we must seize the first Opportunity that offered, when *Don Gabriel* went to hunt, as he often did, and *Benavides* employed in his domestic Affairs, for which he always set apart two Mornings in a Week.

He then made me promise, that, to avoid giving any Suspicion, I should go on with my painting as usual: but that I should likewise declare, that I was under a Necessity of returning soon to my own Country.

Accordingly I resumed my former Employment; I had almost, without perceiving it, some Hope that *Adelaida* would come again into that Apartment. Every Noise I heard gave me an Emotion, I was scarce able to bear. In this Situation I remained several Days, and then losing all Hope of seeing *Adelaida* in that Manner, I eagerly sought for some Moment in which I might be so fortunate as to find her alone.

At length this Moment came. I was going as usual to my Work, when I saw *Adelaida* passing to her own Apartment. I knew that *Don Gabriel* went out early that Morning to hunt, and I had heard *Benavides* talking in a low Hall of the Castle to one of his Farmers, so that I was pretty certain of finding her alone.

I ente-

I entered her Apartment with so much Precipitation that *Adelaida* saw me not, till I was very near her. She would have retired to her Closet as soon as she perceived me, but I caught hold of her Robe and prevented her.

‘ Do not fly from me, Madam, (said I to her) suffer me this last Time to enjoy the Blessing of beholding you. I shall never importune you more. I am going far from you to die with Grief for the Miseries I have been the Cause of to you, and for the Loss of your Heart. I wish *Don-Gabriel* may be more fortunate than I have been.’

Adelaida, whose Surprise had hitherto prevented her from speaking, interrupted me at these Words, and giving me a Look of mingled Tenderness and Anger.

‘ What, (said she) dare you make me Reproaches? Dare you suspect me? --- you.

The Tone, with which she pronounced this last Word, brought me instantly at her Feet.

‘ No, my dear *Adelaida*, (interrupted I) no, I have no Suspicion that is injurious to you. Pardon a few distracted Words, which my Heart disavows.’

‘ I pardon

‘ I Pardon you all, (said she to me)
 ‘ provided you depart immediately and
 ‘ never attempt to see me more. Re-
 ‘ flect that it is for your Sake I am the
 ‘ most miserable Creature in the World,
 ‘ would you give me Cause to reproach
 ‘ myself with being the most criminal.’

‘ I will do every thing you command
 ‘ me, (replied I) but only promise that you
 ‘ will not hate me.’

Although *Adelaida* had several times de-
 fired me to rise, yet I still continued at
 her Feet. To those who truly love, this
 Attitude has a thousand secret Charms. I
 was still kneeling when *Benavides* suddenly
 opened the Chamber Door. Transported
 with rage, he flew towards his Wife, and
 drawing his Sword.

‘ Thou shalt die, perfidious Woman,’
 (cried he) and would have infallibly kil-
 led her, had I not thrown myself be-
 tween them, and put by his Sword with
 my own.

‘ Wretch ! (cried *Benavides*) you first
 ‘ shall feel my Vengeance !’ And at the same
 Time gave me a Wound on my Shoulder.
 I did not love Life well enough to be so-
 licitous for the Preservation of it : but my
 hatred to *Benavides* would not suffer me
 to abandon it to his Fury, this cruel At-
 tempt

tempt upon the Person of his Wife deprived me almost of Reason. I threw myself upon him, and plunging my Sword in his Body, he fell at my Feet without Sense or Motion.

The Servants, drawn by the Cries of Madam *de Benavides*, entered the Room that Moment, and several of them throwing themselves upon me, disarmed me while I made no Effort to defend myself. The Sight of Madam *de Benavides* bathed in Tears, and kneeling by her Husband, left me no Sensibility of any Thing but her Grief. I was dragged out of her Chamber into another, and the Door fastened upon me.

There it was, that, delivered up to my own Reflections, I saw the Abyss into which I had plunged Madam *de Benavides*, the Death of her Husband, killed before her Eyes, and killed by me, could not fail of giving rise to Suspicions against her. What Reproaches did I not make myself! I had been the Cause of her first Misfortunes, and I had now compleated her Ruin by my Imprudence.

My Imagination continually represented to me the dreadful Condition in which I had left her. I acknowledged that she had just Reason to hate me, and I did not murmur at it. The only Consolation I had

had, was in the Hope that I was not known: the Idea of being taken for an Assassins and a Robber, which on any other Occasion would have made me tremble with Horror, now gave me Joy. *Adelaida* knew the Innocence of my Intentions, and *Adelaida* was the whole World to me.

Impatient to be interrogated, that I might clear the Honor of *Adelaida*, I pass several Hours in the most racking Inquietude; in the Middle of the Night my Chamber Door was opened, and I saw *Don Gabriel* enter.

‘ Be not apprehensive of any Harm, (said he to me, as he approached) I come by the Command of Madam *de Benavides*, she has had Esteem enough for me to trust me with every Thing relating to you, probably, (added he, with a Sigh which he could not suppress) she would have judged differently if she had known me well, but I will be just to her Confidence. I will save you, and I will save her, if I can.’

‘ You shall not save me, (replied I) I ought to justify the innocence of Madam *de Benavides*, and I will do it at the Expence of a thousand Lives, if I had them to lose.

I then acquainted him with my Design of keeping myself concealed, and passing
for

for an Assassin to prevent any Imputation falling upon her.

‘ This Project might be necessary, (replied *Don Gabriel*) if my Brother was dead as I perceive you think. But his wound, altho’ great, is probably not mortal, and the first Sign of Life and Sense he had given, was to order that *Madam de Benavides* should be confined to her own Apartment. This proves that he suspects you are her Lover, and if you persist in your Design, you will lose your own Life without preserving hers. Let us go, (added he) the Safety I offer you to-day, I probably cannot afford you to-morrow.’

‘ And what will become of *Madam de Benavides*? (cried I) No I can never resolve to withdraw myself from Danger, and to leave her in it.’

‘ I have already told you, (replied *Don Gabriel*) that your Presence will only render her Situation worse.’

‘ Well, (said I sighing) I will fly since you will have it so, and that her Interest demands it. I had hoped that by the Sacrifice I intended to make her of my Life, I should at least have been pitied by her: but I deserve not to have this Consolation. I am an unhappy Wretch, who
am

‘ am not even worthy to die for her. Pro-
 ‘ tect her (added I, to *Don Gabriel*, the
 ‘ Tears streaming from my Eyes as I spoke)
 ‘ you are generous; her Innocence, her
 ‘ Misfortunes must move you.’

‘ You may judge (said he) by what has
 ‘ escaped me, that I am too much for my
 ‘ own Quiet concerned in the Fate of Ma-
 ‘ dam *de Benavides*. I will do every Thing
 ‘ for her. Alas ! (added he) I should have
 ‘ thought myself well paid, if I could have
 ‘ flattered myself that she had loved no one.
 ‘ How is it possible that you should not be
 ‘ satisfied with your good Fortune in having
 ‘ touched a Heart like hers ? But let us go,
 ‘ (pursued he) let us take Advantage of the
 ‘ Night.’

Then taking my Hand and turning a dark
 Lanthorn, he led me through the Courts of
 the Castle. Transported with Rage against
 myself for what I had done, in the Wildness
 of my Despair, I wished myself still more
 miserable than I was.

Don Gabriel when he left me, advised
 me to retire to a Convent of Religious
 which was within a Quarter of a League of
 the Castle.

‘ You must (said he) keep yourself con-
 ‘ cealed in their House for some Days, that
 ‘ you may not be in Danger from the Search

‘ I myself shall be obliged to make for you ;
 ‘ and here is a Letter for one of those Religious, which will procure you Admission
 ‘ into the House.’

I loitered a long Time about the Castle after he left me, not being able to remove myself far from the Place where *Adelaida* was; at length the Desire of hearing all that happened to her, determined me to set out for the Convent.

I arrived there just at Day-break: the Religious to whom I delivered *Don Gabriel's* Letter, received me very civilly, and carried me into a Chamber near his own. My Paleness and the Blood he observed upon my Cloaths, made him apprehensive that I was wounded. He was begining to enquire after my Health, when I fainted away: with the Assistance of a Servant he put me into Bed, and sent for the Surgeon belonging to the Convent to examine my Wound: he declared that it was in a dangerous Condition, through the Fatigue and Cold I had suffered.

When I was alone with the good Father to whom I was recommended, I intreated him to send to a House in a certain Village I named to him, to enquire for *Saint Laurent*, for I supposed he would take Refuge there. I was not mistaken, he came with the Messenger I had sent to him: the poor Fel-

Fellow was in excessive Affliction when he heard that I was wounded, he approached my Bed-side, and anxiously enquired how I did.

‘ If you would save my Life (said I to him)
‘ you must learn in what State Madam de
‘ Benavides is : inform yourself of all that
‘ has passed. Haste, lose not a Moment,
‘ and remember that what I suffer in this
‘ Uncertainty, is ten thousand times worse
‘ than Death.’ *Saint Laurent* promised to
do every Thing I desired, and went away
to take proper Measures for satisfying me.

Mean Time I was seized with a violent
Fever, my Wound grew more dangerous,
they were obliged to make large Incisions,
but the Torments of my Mind made me
almost insensible to those of my Body ; the
Image of Madam de Benavides bathed in
Tears, as I had seen her when I left her
Chamber, and kneeling by her Husband
whom I had wounded, was continually be-
fore my Eyes. I took a Review of the Mis-
fortunes of her Life, I found myself in all ;
her Marriage to which she was forced on
my Account, her fatal Choice of the most
jealous and brutal Man in the World for a
Husband, was made for my Sake, and I had
lately compleated all her Misfortunes by ex-
posing her Reputation to injurious Censures.
I called to my Remembrance the unjust Jeal-
ousy I had discovered, which, although it

I 2 had

had lasted but a few Moments, and was banished by a single Word from her, yet I could never pardon myself for. *Adelaida* could not but think me unworthy of her Esteem, she could do no otherwise than hate me. This melancholly Apprehension I supported by the Rage with which I was animated against myself.

Saint Laurent returned the next Day, he informed me that *Benavides* was still extremely ill of his Wound, that *Adelaida* was in the utmost Affliction, and that *Don Gabriel* made a shew of seeking for me every where.

This News was not very likely to calm the Perturbations of my Mind. I knew not what I ought to wish for, every Thing was against me, I could not even wish for Death, I thought I owed the Prolongation of my wretched Life to the Justification of *Madam de Benavides*.

The good Father to whom I was recommended, beheld me with great Compassion, he heard me sigh continually, and always found my Face bathed in Tears. He was a Man of Sense and Politeness, who had been long in the World, and whom a Concurrency of strange Accidents had drove into a Cloister. He did not endeavour to reason me out of my Grief, or to console me by the usual Methods, he only expressed great
Sen-

Sensibility of my Misfortunes ; this Way succeeded: by Degrees he entirely gained my Confidence, perhaps also I only wanted an Opportunity to speak, and to complain to him. I conceived so great an Affection and Esteem for him, that I related to him my whole Story. He became so necessary to me after a few Days Stay in the Convent, that I could not bear him to be absent from me a Moment: I never met with a Man who had more real Goodness of Heart ; I repeated to him the same Things a thousand Times over, he always listened to me with the utmost Attention, and sympathised in all my Grievs.

It was through him that I learned every Thing that passed in the House of *Benavides*.

He had been much in danger from his Wound, but it was at length cured. I was informed of it by *Don Jerome*, so was my Friend the Religious called. He afterwards told me that all seemed quiet in the Castle, that *Madam de Benavides* lived more retired than before, and that she was in a very languishing State of Health. He added, that I must resolve to remove as soon as I was able, for if it should be discovered that I was concealed there, it would expose *Madam de Benavides* to new Distresses.

It was not likely that I should be soon in a Condition to leave the Convent. I was wasting away with a continual Fever, and my Wound was not yet healed. I had been in this religious House above two Months, when one Day I observed *Don Jerome* to be pensive and melancholly, he always turned his Eyes away when they met mine, he seemed studiously to avoid looking at me and with Difficulty answered my Questions. I had conceived a very tender Friendship for him : Misfortunes give Sensibility to the Heart. I was going to express my Concern for his Uneasiness, and to enquire into the Cause, when *Saint Laurent* entering my Chamber, told me that *Don Gabriel* was in the Convent, and that he had just met him.

‘ *Don Gabriel* here (said I looking at *Don Jerome*) and you never to mention to me his Coming ! What is the meaning of this Reserve ? You fill me with the most dreadful Apprehensions : what is become of *Madam de Benavides* ? For Pity draw me out of this cruel Uncertainty.

‘ Would I could leave you always in it !’
(said *Don Jerome* at length embracing me.)

‘ Ah ! (cried I) she is dead, *Adelaida* is dead ! *Benavides* has sacrificed her to his Rage ! You answer me not --- alas ! then I have nothing to hope. Ah ! it was not
‘ *Bena-*

' Benavides but I who have plunged the
 ' Poignard into her Breast, but for my fa-
 ' tal Passion she might have been still alive---
 ' *Adelaida* is dead, I shall never behold her
 ' more --- I have lost her for ever, she is
 ' dead, and I still live! Why do I not fol-
 ' low her, why do I delay to revenge her
 ' upon her Murderer? ---- Alas! Death
 ' would be too great an Indulgence to me,
 ' it would separate me from myself, and I
 ' am made up of Horror and Anguish.'

The violent Agitation I was in caused my
 Wound, which was not yet well healed, to
 open again. I lost so much Blood that I
 fell into a Swoon, which lasted so long, that
 they thought me dead; but after continuing
 several Hours in this happy State of Insen-
 sibility, I awoke to Grief unutterable.

Don Jerome apprehensive that I should
 make an Attempt upon my own Life, charg-
 ed *Saint Laurent* to watch me with the
 strictest Attention. My Despair now took
 another Form: I complained not, I shed
 not a Tear; then it was that I formed a
 Resolution to go and inhabit some Solitude
 where I might, without Controul, deliver
 myself up a Prey to my Affliction.

I was desirous of seeing *Don Gabriel*, for
 I eagerly sought every Thing that could
 heighten my Despair. I intreated *Don Je-*
rome to bring him, and the next Day they

came together into my Chamber. *Don Gabriel* seated himself upon the Side of my Bed, we continued a long Time silent, neither of us were able to speak : he looked upon me with Eyes swimming in Tears.

‘ You are very generous, Monsieur (said I) at length to visit a Wretch whom you have so much Reason to hate.’

‘ You are too miserable (replied he) to make it possible for me to hate you.’

‘ Ah ! (cried I) tell me, I beseech you, every Circumstance of my Misfortunes, leave me ignorant of nothing, the Explanation I desire of you may possibly prevent my taking some Measures which you have an Interest to hinder.’

‘ I shall redouble your Affliction and my own (replied he) but I cannot help it :--- I will satisfy you, and in the Recital I am going to make you, you will find you are not the only Person to be pitied. Take then the Incidents in order as they happened, we shall too soon come to the melancholly Catastrophe.’

‘ I had never seen *Madam de Benavides* till she became my Sister-in-law ; my Brother, who had some Affairs of Consequence to settle at *Bourdeaux*, saw her there and fell in love with her : and although he
‘ had

‘ had several Rivals, whose Birth and
‘ Riches were superior to his, yet Madam
‘ *de Benavides*, for Reasons I never could
‘ guess at, preferred him to them all: a
‘ short Time after their Marriage, he
‘ brought her to his Estate in *Biscay*, there
‘ it was that I saw her for the first Time:
‘ if her Beauty excited my Admiration, I
‘ was still more charmed with the Graces
‘ of her Mind, and the extreme Sweetness
‘ of her Temper, which my Brother put
‘ every Day to new Tryals. However the
‘ Passion I then had for a very amiable
‘ young Person, made me believe I was
‘ secured from the Influence of her Charms
‘ which it was impossible to behold without
‘ Love: I even designed to make use of my
‘ Sister-in-law’s Interest with my Brother,
‘ to prevail upon him to consent to our
‘ Marriage. The Father of my Mistress,
‘ offended at my Brother’s Refusal, had given
‘ me but a very short Time to bring him to
‘ a Compliance, declaring that when it was
‘ expired he would marry his Daughter to
‘ another.

‘ The Friendship and Esteem which Ma-
‘ dam *de Benavides* expressed for me, gave
‘ me Courage to implore her Assistance. I
‘ often went to her Apartment with an In-
‘ tention to speak to her, but the slightest
‘ Obstacle imaginable restrained me: mean-
‘ while the Time which had been prescribed
‘ to me drew towards a Period. I had re-

' ceived several Letters from my Mistress,
 ' in which she prest me to use every Method
 ' to gain my Brother's Consent. My An-
 ' swers did not satisfy her: without my per-
 ' ceiving it, an Expression of Coldness ran
 ' through them which drew many Com-
 ' plaints from her, they appeared to me to
 ' be unjust, and I reproached her with it.
 ' She now believed herself abandoned, and
 ' Resentment joined to the Commands of
 ' her Father, determined her to marry the
 ' Person he proposed to her; she herself in
 ' a Letter she wrote to me informed me of
 ' her Marriage: she reproached me but it
 ' was with Tenderness, and concluded with
 ' earnestly intreating me never to see her
 ' more. I had loved her passionately, I
 ' imagined I still loved her, and I could not
 ' learn that I had lost her for ever without
 ' feeling a real Affliction. I was afraid she
 ' was unhappy, and I reproached myself with
 ' being the Cause of it.

' Absorbed in these Reflections I conti-
 ' nued walking in a melancholly Manner
 ' in the little Wood which you used often
 ' to visit: there I was met by Madam *de*
 ' *Benavides*, who observing my Uneasiness,
 ' kindly desired to know the Cause of it.
 ' A secret Repugnance which I felt within
 ' myself, restrained me from telling her. I
 ' could not resolve to own to her that I had
 ' been in Love, but the Pleasure of speaking
 ' to her of that Passion carried it over that
 ' Con-

‘ Consideration. All these Emotions passed
 ‘ in my Heart without my perceiving the
 ‘ Cause, as yet I had not dared to examine
 ‘ into the Nature of what I felt for my Sister-
 ‘ in-law. I related my Story to her, I
 ‘ shewed her the Letter which *Isabella*
 ‘ had wrote to me.’

‘ Why did you not mention this sooner
 ‘ to me (said Madam *de Benavides*) perhaps
 ‘ I might have been able to obtain the Con-
 ‘ sent of your Brother, tho’ he refused it to
 ‘ you. My God! how much I pity you,
 ‘ how greatly am I concerned for her: she
 ‘ doubtless will be miserable.’

‘ The Compassion, which Madam *de Be-
 ‘ navides* expressed for *Isabella*, made me
 ‘ apprehensive that she would think hardly
 ‘ of me, as the Person who had made her
 ‘ unhappy. To diminish therefore this
 ‘ Compassion, I eagerly told her that the
 ‘ Husband of *Isabella* was a Man of Birth
 ‘ and Merit, that he held a very consider-
 ‘ able Rank in the World, and that it
 ‘ was highly probable his Fortune would be
 ‘ still more so’.

‘ You are deceived (answered my lovely
 ‘ Sister-in-Law) if you think all these Ad-
 ‘ vantages can make her happy, nothing
 ‘ can make amends for the Loss of what
 ‘ one loves. It is a cruel Misfortune (add-
 ‘ ed she) when one is obliged to act contrary’

‘ to one’s Inclination to comply with one’s
 ‘ Duty.’

‘ She sighed several Times during this
 ‘ Conversation, I even perceived that it
 ‘ was with Difficulty she restrained her
 ‘ Tears.

‘ She left me soon afterwards, I had not
 ‘ Power to follow her, I remained in a
 ‘ Trouble and Confusion I am not able to
 ‘ describe. I now, for the first Time, per-
 ‘ ceived what I had hitherto industriously
 ‘ concealed from myself, that I was in love
 ‘ with my Sister-in-law, and I thought I
 ‘ could discover a secret Passion in her Heart.
 ‘ A thousand Circumstances then rushed up-
 ‘ on my Memory, which before I had given
 ‘ no Attention to, her Taste for Solitude,
 ‘ her Indifference for all those Amusements
 ‘ which make the Delight of Persons of her
 ‘ Sex and Age, her extreme Melancholly,
 ‘ which I had attributed to my Brother’s bad
 ‘ Treatment of her, now seemed to me to
 ‘ proceed from another Cause. How many
 ‘ sad Reflections now rose at one Time in
 ‘ my Mind, I found myself in love with a
 ‘ Person whom I ought not to love, and this
 ‘ Person’s Heart in the Possession of another.

‘ If she loved nothing (said I) my Passion,
 ‘ although without Hope, would not be
 ‘ without Sweetness : I might pretend to the
 ‘ Blessing of her Friendship, in that I would
 ‘ place

place my Felicity. But this Friendship will not satisfy my Heart, since she has Sentiments more tender for another.--- I was sensible I ought to use my utmost Endeavours to vanquish a Passion so dangerous to my Quiet, and which Honour would not permit me to entertain. I took a Resolution to fly from my too lovely Sister, and I returned to the Castle to tell my Brother that some Affairs called me from him: but the Sight of Madam *de Benavides* left me no Power to follow the Dictates of my Reason, all my Resolutions vanished into Air, yet to furnish myself with some Pretence to continue near her, I persuaded myself that I was necessary to her, in being sometimes able to calm the tempestuous Humours of her Husband.

About this Time you arrived. I found in your Air and Behaviour somewhat greatly above the Condition you appeared in. I treated you with Familiarity and Kindness, I would have entered into your Confidence, and have made you my Friend, my Intention was to prevail upon you afterwards to draw a Picture of Madam *de Benavides* for me, for notwithstanding the delusive Reasons my Passion found for staying with my Sister, yet I resolved some Time or other to leave the Castle. But in this Separation so just, so necessary, I was willing at least to have her Picture.

The

‘ The Manner in which you received the
 ‘ Advances I made you, shewed me that I
 ‘ had nothing to hope for from you, and I
 ‘ was gone to bring another Painter into
 ‘ the House that unhappy Day when you
 ‘ wounded my Brother. Judge of my Sur-
 ‘ prize at my Return, when I was inform-
 ‘ ed of what had happened. My Brother,
 ‘ who was desperately wounded, kept a
 ‘ gloomy Silence, casting from Time to
 ‘ Time a terrible Look upon Madam *de*
 ‘ *Benavides*. As soon as he saw me he called
 ‘ me to his Bed-side.

‘ Deliver me (said he) from the Sight of a
 ‘ Woman who has betrayed me, cause her
 ‘ to be conducted to her own Apartment,
 ‘ and give strict Orders not to suffer her to
 ‘ stir out of it.’

‘ I would have said something against this
 ‘ rigorous Order to my Brother, but he
 ‘ interrupted me at the first Word.

‘ Do as I desire you (said he) or never
 ‘ see me more.’

‘ I was obliged to obey, and approach-
 ‘ ing my Sister-in-Law I intreated her to
 ‘ let me speak to her in her own Chamber.’

‘ Let us go, (said she weeping) exe-
 ‘ cute the Orders you have received.’

‘ These

‘ These Words, which had the Air of
‘ a Reproach, pierced me to the Soul.
‘ I durst not make her any Answer in the
‘ Place we were then in; but no sooner
‘ had I led her to her Chamber, than look-
‘ ing on her with that Grief and Tender-
‘ ness my Heart was full of,’

‘ What, Madam, (said I) do you con-
‘ found me with your Persecutor; I who
‘ feel your Trouble as sensibly as you do
‘ yourself, I who would sacrifice my Life
‘ to save you? I grieve to say it, but I
‘ tremble for you. Retire for some Time
‘ to a Place of Safety, I will procure you
‘ to be conducted wherever you please so
‘ it is a secure Asylum from your furious
‘ Husband.’

‘ I know not (said she) whether Mon-
‘ sieur *de Benavides* has any Design to take
‘ away my Life, but I know that it is my
‘ Duty not to abandon him, and I will
‘ fulfil it tho’ I perish.’

‘ Then after a short Pause (she added)
‘ I am going, by placing an entire Confi-
‘ dence in you, to give you the greatest
‘ Mark of my Esteem it is in my Power
‘ to give, and indeed the Confession I have
‘ to make you is necessary to preserve yours
‘ for me. But go and attend your Brother,
‘ a longer Conversation may make you
‘ suspected

' suspected by him. Return hither as soon
' as you conveniently can.'

' I obeyed Madam *de Benavides* and
' went to my Brother's Apartment, the
' Surgeon had visited him, and desired that
' no one might be allowed to come into his
' Chamber. I flew back again to his Wife,
' agitated with a thousand different Thoughts.
' I was anxious to know what she had to
' say to me, and yet I feared to hear it.
' She related to me the Manner in which
' she became acquainted with you, the
' Passion you conceived for her the Mo-
' ment you saw her, the generous Sacrifice
' you had made her, and she did not con-
' ceal the Tenderneſs with which you had
' inspired her.'

' Ah ! (interrupted I) have I then been
' dear to the most perfect Woman upon
' Earth, and have I lost her.' This Idea
filled my Soul with such tender Sorrow, that
my Tears, which had hitherto been re-
strained by the Excess of my Despair,
began now to stream in great Abundance
from my Eyes.

' Yes continued *Dan Gabriel* (with a
' Sigh) you were beloved. Good Heaven !
' what Tenderneſs did I not discover for
' you in her Heart, notwithstanding her
' Misfortunes and the Horror of her present
' Situation. I perceived that she indulged
' with

‘ with Pleasure the Thought, that her Tender-
‘ derness for you was authorised by what you
‘ had done for her. She confessed to me
‘ that when I led her into the Chamber
‘ where you was painting, she knew you,
‘ and that she had wrote to you, to com-
‘ mand you to leave the Castle, but that she
‘ could not find an Opportunity to give you
‘ her Letter : she afterwards related to me
‘ how her Husband surpris’d you together
‘ at the very Moment when you was bid-
‘ ding her an eternal Farewell ; that he
‘ attempted to kill her, but you interposed
‘ and wounded him in defending her.’

‘ Save this unhappy Man (added she)
‘ you only can preserve him from the Fate
‘ that waits him, for I know that in the
‘ Fear of exposing me to the least Sus-
‘ picion, he will suffer the most cruel
‘ Death rather than declare who he is.’

‘ He is well rewarded for all he can
‘ suffer, Madam (replied I) by the good
‘ Opinion you have of him.’

‘ I have owned my Weakness to you
‘ (said she) but you have seen that if I am
‘ not Mistress of my Affections, I have
‘ at least been so of my Conduct, and that
‘ I have taken no Step which the most ri-
‘ gorous Virtue could condemn.’

‘ Alas !

' Alas ! Madam, (interrupted I) it is
 ' not necessary that you should condescend
 ' to justify yourself to me. Too well am
 ' I convinced by my own Experience that it
 ' is not always in one's Power to dispose of
 ' one's own Heart. I will use my utmost
 ' endeavours to obey you and to deliver the
 ' Count *de Comminge*: but oh ! Madam,
 ' permit me to assure you that I am more
 ' miserable than he is.'

' I left the Room as I pronounced these
 ' Words without daring to raise my Eyes
 ' to Madam *de Benavides*. I shut myself up
 ' in my own Chamber to consider what I
 ' had to do. I had already taken a Resolution
 ' to deliver you, but I was in doubt whether
 ' I ought not to fly from the Castle myself.
 ' The Torments I had suffered during the
 ' relation Madam *de Benavides* had made me,
 ' shewed me the Excess of my Passion for
 ' her, it was necessary that I should suppress
 ' Sentiments so dangerous to my Virtue, and
 ' in order to suppress them, it was necessary I
 ' should see her no more ; but it seemed cruel
 ' to abandon her in such a distressful Situation,
 ' to leave her unprotected in the Hands of a
 ' Husband who believed himself wronged by
 ' her. After continuing long irresolute, I
 ' determined at once to assist Madam *de Bena-*
 ' *vides*, and to avoid seeing her as much as
 ' possible. I could not inform her of your
 ' Escape till the next Day : she seemed a
 ' little more easy on your Account, but I
 ' thought

‘ thought I could perceive that her Grief was
 ‘ increased, and I doubted not but the De-
 ‘ claration I had made of my Sentiments was
 ‘ the Cause. I quitted her immediately in
 ‘ order to free her from the Embarrassment
 ‘ my Presence threw her into.’

‘ I was several Days without seeing her,
 ‘ my Brother grew worse and his Physicians
 ‘ thought him in great Danger. I was
 ‘ obliged to make her a Visit to acquaint her
 ‘ with this News.’

‘ If I had lost Monsieur *de Benavides*
 ‘ (said she) in the ordinary Methods of
 ‘ Providence, his Death would have less
 ‘ sensibly affected me, but the Part I have
 ‘ unfortunately had in it, makes it an in-
 ‘ supportable Affliction to me. I am not
 ‘ apprehensive of the ill Treatment I may
 ‘ meet with from him, I am only afraid
 ‘ of his dying in a Persuasion that I have
 ‘ wronged him. If he lives I may hope
 ‘ that he will be one Day convinced of
 ‘ my Innocence, and restore me to his
 ‘ Esteem.’

‘ Suffer me, Madam, (said I) to endea-
 ‘ vour to merit yours. I implore your
 ‘ Pardon for those Sentiments I have dared
 ‘ to let you perceive. I was not able to pre-
 ‘ vent their Birth, or to conceal them from
 ‘ you. I even know not whether I can
 ‘ subdue them; but I swear to you, that I
 ‘ will

‘ will never importune you with them. I
 ‘ had taken a Resolution to fly far from you,
 ‘ but your Interest retains me here.’

‘ I confess to you (replied Madam *de Be-*
 ‘ *navides*) that you have given me great
 ‘ Uneasiness: Fortune seemed desirous of
 ‘ taking from me the Consolation I have
 ‘ found in your Friendship.’

‘ The Tears she shed while she spoke to
 ‘ me were more powerful than all the Efforts
 ‘ of my Reason. I was ashamed of having
 ‘ augmented the Miseries of one already so
 ‘ unhappy.

‘ No Madam, (replied I) you shall never
 ‘ be deprived of that Friendship you have
 ‘ the Goodness to set some Value upon,
 ‘ and I will endeavour to render myself
 ‘ worthy of yours, by my Solicitude to
 ‘ make you forget the Extravagance I have
 ‘ been guilty of.’

‘ In Effect, when I left her I found my-
 ‘ self more calm and easy, than I had ever
 ‘ been since I first beheld her. Far from
 ‘ leaving her, I endeavoured by the Reso-
 ‘ lutions I vowed to take when in her Pre-
 ‘ sence to furnish myself with new Arguments
 ‘ for performing my Duty. This Method
 ‘ succeeded: I accustomed myself by Degrees
 ‘ to reduce my former Sentiments to Friend-
 ‘ ship and Esteem, I told her ingenuously the
 ‘ Progress

‘ Progress I made in my Cure, she thanked me
‘ for it, as for some considerable service I
‘ had rendered her; and to reward me gave
‘ me every Day new Marks of her Confi-
‘ dence. Still my Heart would sometimes
‘ revolt, but Reason always got the Victory.

‘ My Brother after languishing a long
‘ Time at length began to recover: he would
‘ never be prevailed upon to give his Wife
‘ permission to see him tho’ she often requested
‘ it. He was not yet in a Condition to
‘ leave his Chamber, when Madam *de Be-*
‘ *navides* fell ill in her turn. Her Youth
‘ saved her this Time, and I was full of
‘ hope that her Illness had softened her Hus-
‘ band’s Heart, for although he had continued
‘ obstinately resolute not to see her during his
‘ own Danger notwithstanding her earnest
‘ intreaties yet he shewed some solicitude in
‘ enquiring for her when she was ill.

‘ She was almost recovered when my
‘ Brother ordered me to be called to
‘ him.

‘ I have some important Business (said
‘ he) which demands my Presence in *Sara-*
‘ *gossa*. My Health will not permit me
‘ to take this Journey, I must intreat you
‘ therefore to go in my stead. I have or-
‘ dered my Equipage to be got ready and
‘ you will oblige me by setting out imme-
‘ diately.’ The Marquis *de Benavides* is older
‘ than

' than by a great Number of Years. I
 ' have always had the same Respect for
 ' him, as for a Father. And he has held
 ' the Place of one to me. Besides I had no
 ' Reason to urge which could dispense with
 ' my doing as he desired. I was obliged
 ' therefore to resolve to go, but I thought
 ' this ready Compliance gave me a Right
 ' to speak to him in Favour of Madam *de*
 ' *Benavides*. What did I not say to soften
 ' him! he appeared to me to be shaken,
 ' I even fancied I saw Tears in his Eyes.'

' I have loved Madam *de Benavides* (said
 ' he to me) with the most ardent Passion,
 ' it is not yet extinguished in my Heart;
 ' but Time and her future Conduct can only
 ' efface the Remembrance of what I have
 ' seen.' I durst not enter into any Dis-
 ' course with him, concerning the Cause of
 ' his Complaints, that would have again
 ' recalled his former Rage, I only desired
 ' permission to acquaint my Sister-in-law
 ' with the Hopes he had given me. He
 ' granted my Request: this poor Lady re-
 ' ceived the News I brought her with a
 ' kind of Joy.

' I know (said she) that I can never be
 ' happy with Monsieur *de Benavides*, but I
 ' shall at least have the Consolation of being
 ' where my Duty calls me.'

' After

‘ After having again assured her of my
‘ Brother’s good Disposition to her, I took
‘ my Leave of her. One of the chief Do-
‘ mestics in the House, in whom I confided,
‘ had promised to be strictly attentive to
‘ every Thing that regarded her, and to
‘ give me Information.

‘ After these Precautions which I thought
‘ sufficient, I set out for *Saragossa*. I had
‘ been there fifteen Days without having
‘ any News from the Castle, and was be-
‘ ginning to be very uneasy at this long Si-
‘ lence, when I received a Letter from the
‘ faithful Domestic I mentioned. He in-
‘ formed me that three Days after my De-
‘ parture, Monsieur *de Benavides* had dis-
‘ charged him and all the rest of his Ser-
‘ vants, except one Man whom he named
‘ to me, and the Wife of that Man.

‘ I trembled as I read this Letter, and
‘ without troubling myself any farther about
‘ the Business with which I was charged, I
‘ hired Post Horses to return to the Castle.

‘ When I was within a Day’s Journey of
‘ this Place, I received the fatal News of
‘ the Death of Madam *de Benavides*. My
‘ Brother who wrote to me himself, ap-
‘ peared so greatly afflicted, that I could
‘ not suppose he had been accessory to it.
‘ He told me the great Love he had for his
‘ Wife had subdued his Resentment, and
‘ that

‘ that he was ready to pardon her when
 ‘ Death snatched her from him. That she
 ‘ had relapsed a short Time after my De-
 ‘ parture, and her Fever encreasing she died
 ‘ upon the fifteenth Day of her Illness.
 ‘ Since I came hither to seek some Conso-
 ‘ lation in the Company of *Don Jerome*, I
 ‘ have been informed that my Brother is
 ‘ plunged in the deepest Sadness, that he
 ‘ sees no one, and he has even intreated me
 ‘ to defer seeing him for some Time.

‘ I find no Difficulty in complying with
 ‘ his Request (continued *Don Gabriel*) those
 ‘ Places in which I have seen the unfortunate
 ‘ *Madam de Benavides*, and where I shall
 ‘ no more see her, would encrease my
 ‘ Grief: her Death seems to have awaken-
 ‘ ed all my former Sentiments, and I know
 ‘ not whether the Tears I shed, do not more
 ‘ proceed from Love than Friendship. I
 ‘ have determined to go into *Hungary*,
 ‘ where I hope either to find Death in the
 ‘ War, or to recover the Peace I have lost.’

Here *Don Gabriel* ceased to speak. I was
 not able to answer him, but with Tears,
 my Voice was lost in Sighs; *Don Gabriel*
 also wept bitterly, at length he left me with-
 out my being able to utter a single Word.
Don Jerome attended him out, and I was
 left alone: the melancholly Relation I had
 just heard, increased my Impatience to see
 myself in a Place where I might abandon my-

myself without Interruption to the Excess of my Grief. The Desire of executing this Scheme hastened my Cure, after having been long in a languishing Condition my Wound was healed, my Strength returned, and I found myself able in a little Time to leave the Convent.

The Parting between *Don Jerome* and I, was on his side full of Tenderness and friendly Concern, but the Loss of *Adelaide* had left me insensible to all other Impressions. I would not acquaint him with my Design lest he should endeavour to oppose it, I wrote to my Mother and sent my Letter by *Saint-Laurent*, making him believe that I would wait for an Answer, in the Place I then was. This Letter contained an Account of all that had happened to me since I saw her last; I earnestly asked her Pardon for leaving her as I resolved to do for ever, I added that in Tenderness to her paternal Affection, I chose to spare her the Sight of a miserable Wretch who had now nothing left to wish for, but Death. And lastly I conjured her not to make any Attempts to discover the Place of my Retreat, and recommended the faithful *Saint-Laurent* to her Protection.

When I parted with him I gave him all the Money I had about me, reserving only what was sufficient to answer my Expences during my Journey. The Letter I had received

from Madam *de Benavides*, and her Picture which I wore next my Heart, was all the Wealth I was posselt of: I travelled with an Impatience which hardly allowed me to stop a few Moments, to the Abbey *de la T.....* Upon my Arrival I demanded the Habit of the Order. The Father Abbot obliged me to undergo the Probationary Forms, and when they where finished, asked me whether the wretched Diet and other Austerities did not appear more than equal to my Strength. Absorbed in Grief I had not even perceived the Difference of my Diet, and the Austerities he mentioned: my Insensibility was taken for a Mark of Zeal, and I was received.

The Certainty I now had that my Tears might flow uninterrupted, and that I might pass my whole Life in this sad Employment, gave me some Kind of Consolation; the horrid Solitude, the melancholy Silence, that reigned in this Cloister, the mortified Countenances of all about me, left me wholly devoted to that Grief, which was become so precious to me, that it supplied the Place of all I had lost. I performed all the Exercises of the Cloister without thinking of their Severity, for every Thing was alike indifferent to me. I went every Day into the thickest Part of the Wood, there would I read over the Letter, and gaze on the Picture of my dear *Adelaida*, bathe them both with my Tears, and replacing them upon my

my Heart, return with greater Weight of Grief.

Three Years I led this melancholy Life, while Time neither alleviated my Sorrow, nor brought the Period to it, which I so earnestly desired, when one Morning I was summoned by the Tolling of the Bell to be present at the Death of one of the Religious. He was already laid upon the Ashes, the last Sacrament was going to be administered to him, when he desired to speak to the Father Abbot.

‘ What I am going to say Father (said the dying Penitent) will animate with new Fervor all who shall hear me, since by Methods so extraordinary I have been drawn out of the Abyss of Sin and Misery into which I was plunged, and conducted to the Port of Salvation. I am unworthy of the Name of Brother, with which these holy Religious have honoured me ; in me you behold an unhappy Woman whom a profane Passion has led to this sanctified Place. I loved and was beloved by a young Man of a Rank equal to my own ; the mutual Hatred of our Fathers put a Bar to our Marriage ; I was even obliged for the Interest of my Lover to give my Hand to another Person, and in the Choice of my Husband, I endeavoured still to give him Proofs of the Continuance of my Passion.

' The Man who could not be supposed to
 ' inspire me with any Sentiments but those
 ' of Hatred and Contempt, was preferred to
 ' every other who address'd me ; because, the
 ' Sacrifice I made him should be compleat,
 ' and that he might have no Cause for
 ' Jealousy. The Almighty decreed that a
 ' Marriage contracted with such criminal
 ' Views should prove a Source of Misery
 ' to me. Although I never after would
 ' consent to see my Lover, yet my Hus-
 ' band and he met and wounded each other
 ' before my Eyes : Terror and Grief threw
 ' me into a violent Illness ; I was scarcely
 ' recovered, when my Husband shut me
 ' up in a private Apartment of his Castle,
 ' and caus'd it to be reported that I was
 ' dead. I continued two Years in that
 ' melancholy Confinement, with no other
 ' Consolation than what the Compassion of
 ' her who daily brought me my Food af-
 ' forded me. My Husband not satisfied
 ' with the Miseries he inflict'd on me, had
 ' the Cruelty to insult me under them.
 ' Oh ! my God (what do I say) dare I ac-
 ' cuse of Cruelty the Instrument thou wast
 ' pleas'd to make use of for my Punishment ?
 ' These Afflictions did not bring me to a
 ' just Sense of the Extravagancies of my
 ' Conduct. Instead of weeping for my
 ' Faults, I wept only for my Lover. The
 ' Death of my Husband set me at Liberty.
 ' The Woman who had serv'd me, being
 ' the only Person who knew the Truth of
 ' my

• my Condition, came to open the Doors
• of my Prison and informed me that I
• had passed for dead from the Moment
• I entered it. Not doubting but the
• Treatment I had met with from my Hus-
• band had given Rise to very unfavourable
• Suspicions of my Virtue, I deliberated
• whether it was not necessary I should pass
• the Rest of my Days in a Convent; and
• I was confirmed in this Design when I
• learned that the only Person who could
• retain me in the World had not been
• heard of for a long Time. I disguised
• myself in the Habit of a Man that I
• might leave the Castle without being
• known. The Convent to which I re-
• solved to retire, was that in which I had
• been educated, and is but a few Leagues
• distant from hence. I was travelling to
• it, when the Solitariness of this Place
• striking my Imagination as I passed by,
• I alighted from my Chaise in order to in-
• dulse my sad Reflections a few Moments.
• A secret Impulse, which I could not re-
• sist, led me in to your Chapel, scarce had
• I entered, when among the Voices that
• sung the Praises of our Lord, I distinguished
• one too well accustomed to reach my
• Heart; I thought at first that my disor-
• dered Imagination had deceived me by a
• fancied Resemblance, but when I ap-
• proached, notwithstanding the Alteration
• which Time, Grief, and the Austerities
• of a Cloister had made in his Counte-

' nance, I immediately knew that Sedu-
 ' cer, so dear to my Remembrance. Great
 ' God! what became of me at this Sight,
 ' what were the cruel Agitations of my
 ' Mind? Far from praising the Almighty
 ' for calling him to so holy a Profession.
 ' I blasphemed against him for having de-
 ' prived me of him; you punished not my
 ' impious Murmurs, oh! my God, and you
 ' made use of my own Folly and Misery
 ' to draw me to yourself. I was not able
 ' to leave a Place which inclosed what I
 ' loved, and in order that we might no
 ' more be separated, I discharged my Guide
 ' and presented myself, Father, to you.
 ' Deceived by the Eagerness I discovered
 ' to be admitted into your Cloister, you
 ' received me willingly. Alas! what was
 ' the Dispositions which I brought to your
 ' holy Exercises, a Heart filled with a pro-
 ' fane Passion, and every Thought em-
 ' ployed on the dear Object of its Tender-
 ' ness. The Almighty who by abandoning
 ' me to my wild Affections would give
 ' me greater Cause for humbling myself
 ' one Day before him, doubtless permitted
 ' those empoisoned delights which I tasted in
 ' breathing the same Air, and living in the
 ' same House with him I loved. I fol-
 ' lowed him every where, I assisted him
 ' in his Labours as much as my Strength
 ' would allow, and in those Moments I
 ' thought myself over-paid for all that I
 ' had suffered, but yet my imprudent Ten-
 ' derness

‘ dernefs did not carry me so far as to
‘ make myself known to him. But what
‘ was the Motive that hindered me? The
‘ Fear of disturbing the Quiet of him for
‘ whom I had lost my own. But for this
‘ fear I should perhaps have attempted to
‘ snatch from God a Soul which I believed
‘ wholly devoted to him.’

‘ Two Months are now elapsed, since, in
‘ Obedience to a Regulation of our holy
‘ Founder, who was desirous by a conti-
‘ nual Idea of Death, to sanctify the Lives
‘ of his Religious, we have been obliged
‘ each to dig his own Grave. I fol-
‘ lowed as usual him to whom I was at-
‘ tached by Ties so shameful. The Sight
‘ of his Grave, the Ardor with which he
‘ dug it, pierced my Heart with such
‘ an Excess of Sorrow, that I was obliged
‘ to leave him and retire to the most
‘ unfrequented Part of the Wood to give
‘ free Course to my Tears. From that
‘ Moment I was in continual Apprehensions
‘ of losing him, the Idea of his Death was
‘ ever present to my Mind, my Tender-
‘ ness increased every Day. I followed
‘ him every where, and if I was some
‘ Hours in a Day without seeing him, I
‘ thought I should never see him more.’

‘ But now the Happy Moment arrived
‘ when God was pleased to draw me to
‘ himself, I went with the Man my Soul

' so fondly loved, into the Forest to cut
 ' Wood for the Uses of the House; after
 ' some Time spent in this Employment,
 ' I perceived that my Companion had left
 ' me; anxious and uneasy at his Absence,
 ' I could not help going to seek for him:
 ' after having wandered through great Part
 ' of the Forest, I saw him at length in one
 ' of the most retired Parts of it, employed
 ' in gazing earnestly upon something he had
 ' taken from his Bosom; he was in so pro-
 ' found a Revery, that I came up close to
 ' him, and had Leisure to look upon what
 ' he held in his Hand without his perceiving
 ' me, how great was my Astonishment when
 ' I saw it was my own Picture. I was now
 ' sensible that far from enjoying that Quiet
 ' I was so unwilling to interrupt, he was
 ' like me the miserable Victim of a cri-
 ' minal Passion: I saw the Powerful Hand
 ' of God ready to fall upon him; that fatal
 ' Passion which I had carried with me even
 ' to the Feet of his Altars, seemed to have
 ' drawn the Vengeance of Heaven upon
 ' him who was the Object of it. Full of this
 ' terrifying Idea I came to prostrate myself
 ' before those Altars, I implored of God
 ' my own Conversion in Order to obtain
 ' that of my Lover. Yes, oh! my God,
 ' it was for him that I offered up my Sup-
 ' plications to thee, for him I shed Tears
 ' of Remorse and Grief, it was the Consi-
 ' deration of his Interest that brought me to
 ' thee. Thou hadst Compassion upon my
 ' Weak-

‘ Weakness, my Prayer, prophane as it
‘ was, thou didst not reject; my Heart be-
‘ came sensible of the healing Power of
‘ thy Grace; from that blissful Moment I
‘ experienced the Peace of a Soul which
‘ is with thee, and desires only thee. Thou
‘ wast pleased to purify me by sufferings:
‘ I was seized with Sickness soon after. If
‘ the Partner of my wild Affections still
‘ groans under the Weight of his profane
‘ Passion, let him cast his Eyes upon me,
‘ let him View the Wretch whom he has
‘ so madly loved, let him reflect upon that
‘ tremendous Moment to which I am now
‘ arrived, and to which he shall shortly
‘ arrive, oh! let him seek God e’er he
‘ has silenced his Mercy to listen only to his
‘ Justice. But I feel the Time of my last
‘ Sacrifice approaching: I beseech these holy
‘ Religious to offer up their Prayers for
‘ my departing Soul; I humbly intreat their
‘ Pardon for the Offence I have given them,
‘ and I acknowledge myself unworthy to
‘ partake of their Sepulchre.’

The sound of that adored Voice, now undisguised, and always present to my Remembrance, made me know *Adelaida* at the first Words she pronounced. What Language can convey an Idea of what I then felt? All that the most ardent Love, all that the tenderest Compassion, all that the most poignant Grief, and wildest Despair could inspire tore my distracted Soul that Moment.

I was prostrate on the Ground like the other Religious, while she was speaking, the Fear of losing any one of her Words restrained my Cries, but when I found that in uttering the Last she had expired; the House echoed with my agonizing Shrieks.

The Religious running to me, raised me from the Ground, I tore myself out of their Arms, I flew to the Corps of *Adelaida*, and kneeling down beside it, I bathed one of her lifeless Hands with my Tears.

‘I have lost you then a second Time
 ‘my dear *Adelaida* (cried I) and I have lost
 ‘you for ever, what! have you been so
 ‘long with me and did not my ungrateful
 ‘Heart acknowledge you? but we will ne-
 ‘ver more be separated: Death, added I,
 ‘folding her in my Arms, Death, less cruel
 ‘than my inexorable Father, shall now, in
 ‘spite of him, unite us for ever.’

True piety is never severe, the Father Abbot, moved at this Sight endeavoured by the tenderest Condolances, and the most holy Exhortations to soften my Grief, and prevail upon me to abandon the Corps of *Adelaida* which I held fast locked in my Arms; finding me deaf to all he could urge, he was obliged to use force, they dragged me from the lovely Body into my own Cell whither the Father Abbot followed me, he staid with me the whole Night, vainly attempting to
 calm

calm my Mind, my Despair was increased by the Consolations he offered me.

‘ Give me *Adelaida*, (said I) why have you separated us ? Suffer me to die beside her. Oh ! why did not my Soul take its Flight with hers. Alas ! I can live no longer in a Place where I have lost her, and where she suffered so many Miseries. Permit me (added I) throwing myself at his Feet, permit me to leave this Cloister, what will you do with a miserable Wretch whose Despair will trouble your Repose ? suffer me to retire to some other Solitude, there to wait for a final End to all my Sorrows. My dear *Adelaida* will obtain of God that my Penitence and Prayers may be effectual for my Salvation. And oh ! Father do not refuse my last Request, promise me that the same Tomb shall unite our Ashes, and I in return engage not to hasten that Moment which my Soul so ardently pants after.’

The Father Abbot moved with Compassion for my Misfortunes, and perhaps desirous of removing from the Eyes of his Religious, an Object which gave so much scandal to their Piety, granted my Request, and promised to do what I desired. I left the Convent that Moment, and came hither where I have lived several Years, having no other Consolation than that of weeping for what I have lost,

The Count of *Comminge* here concluded his affecting Narration, and retired in haste to indulge a Grief which the melancholy Ideas his Story had recalled to his Remembrance, made too violent to be longer restrained.

The Chevalier whose generous Heart was sensibly moved at the sad Recital of so many cruel Misfortunes, sat ruminating a long Time upon what he had heard; he admired the unshaken Fidelity of *Adelaida*, and comparing her Tenderness and truth with the capricious Behaviour of the Countess of *Berci*, he thence drew Arguments to strengthen his Resentment, and to confirm his Resolution of quitting her for ever. He now became so fond of the noble Solitary, that he eagerly watched every Opportunity of conversing with him. He entered so deeply into his Affliction, so pathetically lamented his Misfortunes, and spoke of *Adelaida* with so much Reverence and Admiration, that the melancholy Count found a kind of Sweetness in his Society which he had been long a Stranger to.

The Chevalier knowing how dear the Mention of *Adelaida* was to him, always introduced the sadly pleasing Theme; he would sit whole Hours and listen to his tender Complaints, and while he described the Birth and Progress of his Passion, his Disappointments, his Sufferings and his Despair, he

he would sigh sympathetically, dwell on the most affecting Circumstances of his Story, and sometimes lament the Cruelty of his Fate, with so much Passion, as shewed his Heart had the deepest Sense of his Misfortunes. Nothing could be more soothing to the unfortunate Count than this Conduct; but it was very dangerous to the Quiet of the Chevalier; by such softening Conversations he indulged Ideas which in the Resolution he had taken to quit the Countess of *Bercei* for ever, it was his Business to banish as much as possible from his Mind. His Imagination now represented her to him with all those resistless Graces which first captivated his Affection, a thousand tender Passages rushed back upon his Remembrance; with mingled Pain and Pleasure he reflected on the Time when first her Gratitude for the Services he had done her, forced from her an Acknowledgment of her Love; he thought on those happy Days when she was under his Protection at *Brussels*, and when all Obstacles being removed he was at Liberty to avow his Passion, and was blest with a Declaration that she would be his. When once these Thoughts found free Admittance into his Mind, he gave himself wholly up to their softening Influence: he no longer beheld *Madam de Bercei* false, proud, and ungratefully, but tender, passionate, constant, such as he wished, such as he fain would believe her to be; he sought for Pretences to excuse her Conduct

duct and to blame his own. In all Love-Quarrels the Transition from fancied Hate or Indifference, to Fondness and Desire, is extremely sudden and violent. The Chevalier had no sooner cheated himself into a Persuasion that he had injured his Mistress by his unjust Suspicions, than he was eager to go and throw himself at her Feet, but he was restrained by the Fear of her Resentment for the cruel Letter he had wrote to her, and his voluntary Banishment from her Sight; anxious and impatient, yet timid and irresolute he wore away his Days. He no longer courted the Conversation of the melancholy Solitary, but was wholly absorbed in Reflections on his past Happiness, when the Countess and he convinced of each other's Tenderneſs and Fidelity, suffered no doubt to sadden their blissful Prospect of being united for ever. He sought out the thickest Recesses of the Wood, and there laid at the Foot of some over-grown Oak, he fed his Passion with delightful Hopes, while he forbore to seek the Certainty, for Fear of losing the sweet Delusion.

But now the Approaches of a Rude and chearless Winter, began to lessen his Taste for Solitude and Silence. The Trees had lost their refreshing Shade, the Earth its beautiful Verdure, no more the sweet Harmony of the Birds exhilarated his Spirits, the gently dashing Stream no more by its Murmurs soothed his pleasing
Melan-

Melancholy. All Nature seemed to wear a Face of Sadness, and the altered Prospect now raised only gloomy Ideas in his Mind; his Rage and Indignation turned wholly upon himself, he cursed his Pride, his Folly and his Obstinacy, the Former for having so readily suggested Notions of his being injured and affronted by *Madam de Bercei*, and the Latter for making him so strenuously adhere to his mad Resolution of never seeing her more.

The Design of Returning to *Paris* was as eagerly formed and as quickly executed as that of leaving it had been before. He took a tender Leave of the unhappy Count *de Comminge*, and providing himself with a Horse and a Disguise in the next Village, he set out for that City, with an impatience that never suffered him to stop till he reached the Gates of it.

It was late at Night, which, together with his Disguise, secured him from being known; he alighted at the House of his faithful Friend *Monsieur la Ronvere*: scarce would he give him, leave to express his Joy at seeing him again whom all *Paris* had believed to be dead when he eagerly enquired after the Countess of *Bercei*, asking him a hundred Questions in a Breath. *Monsieur la Ronvere* gave him a particular Account of all that had happened to *Madam de Bercei*, since he left *Paris*, her Grief, her Illness

Illness, and the present languishing State of her Body and Mind.

The Chevalier sighed often while his Friend was speaking, a Tear sometimes stole from his Eyes, yet the Emotions he felt had more of Pleasure than Pain in them. He attributed that Grief, that Illness, and her present Melancholy, to her Regret for the Unjustice she had done him, and her Fears of having lost him for ever. The Idea of being still dear to the Woman whom he adored, and whose supposed Inconstancy had given him so many Pangs, filled him with a Transport which even the Account his Friend gave him of the weak State she was in could not allay. Not doubting but his return, and his renewed Tenderness would restore her to Peace and Health, his Heart exulting in the Proofs she had given of her Love for him, would admit no anxious Fears to disturb his present Happiness; he even resolved to let her remain in Ignorance of his Fate, till he had indulged himself with a Sight of the melancholy Fair one. Unperceived by himself, some Remains of Jealousy and Distrust lay dormant in his Breast; the Delicacy of his Love could not be satisfied with a less certain Testimony of her Grief, than what his own Observation could give him; he fancied to himself a thousand secret Pleasures in contemplating that lovely Face, overspread with tender Sor-

row on his Account, and reading in her sweet expressive Eyes, the dear Inquietude of her Heart.

Monfieur *la Ronvere* who expected to have found him impatient to throw himself at the Feet of the mourning Countess, was surpris'd to see him sit silent and absorbed in thought. 'Surely (said he smiling) it is not necessary to remind you that your Mistress is in *Paris*.' The Chevalier roused from his pleasing Revery, told his Friend that he was resolv'd to remain concealed a few Days, that he might have an Opportunity of seeing the Countess without her knowing him; the Reasons he gave for this Design appeared very whimsical to Monfieur *la Ronvere*, who had no Notion of those Refinements which make up the chief Bliss as well as Pains of Lovers. He tried to reason the Chevalier out of this wild Curiosity, but finding his Arguments would not prevail, he alledged the Impossibility of gratifying it, since the Countess hardly ever came abroad.

The Chevalier had been used to conquer Difficulties, nor was he sorry to hear that it was not an easy Matter to see his Mistress. He disguised himself in a tattered Coat, hid part of his Face with a large black Patch, turned up his Hair under a Wig of a different Colour, and thus metamorphos'd took his Way to the Street where

where Madam *de Berci* resided, having first obliged his Friend to promise that he would keep his Secret faithfully.

The most he could hope for, or indeed desired, was a transient View of his Mistress from the Windows of her Apartment, but he had spent several Days in passing backwards and forwards thro' the Street without obtaining that Satisfaction. Monsieur *la Ronvere* did not fail to divert himself with every new Disappointment, often urging him, tho' in vain, to lay aside his ridiculous Enterprize.

Mean Time the Family *de Saint-Sauveur* were making Preparations for the Nuptials of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* and the young Count of *Berci*. The fair Amazon having by a generous Effort of her Reason conquered her Passion for the Chevalier *des Essars*, listened favourably to the Vows of the Count of *Berci*, who offered her a Heart which had never acknowledged any Power but hers. She had contracted a strict Friendship with the young Marchioness *de Saint-Sauveur* and Madam *de Berci*, and was therefore pleased with an Alliance which made her stand in some Degree of Relation to them.

The King whose Admiration and Esteem of Mademoiselle *de Gevincourt* increased with the Knowledge of her aimiable Qualities, did her the Honour to sign her Contract of Marriage and promised to grace
the

the Solemnity with his Presence; and to do Honour to the Nuptials of a Lady who had signalised herself in Arms, he decreed a solemn Tournament to be held, the Prize, which was a Jewel of great Value, was to be bestowed by her Majesty upon the Cavalier whom Skill or Fortune should most Favour in the Field.

If any Thing would have relieved that Melancholy into which the Chevalier's Absence had plunged Madam *de Berri*, the Marriage of her once dreaded Rival must have done it but in the Supposition that she had for ever lost his Heart, Jealousy could not mingle with the Pangs she felt for that Loss. Jealousy is doubt, but she was in absolute Despair. Unwilling to interrupt by her Grief the Joy which these Nuptials diffused among her Relations, or darken by her melancholy Appearance the Pomp with which they were to be celebrated, she resolved to leave *Paris* a few Days before the Ceremony was performed. But an Accident happened which made her Change this Resolution.

The Chevalier's assumed Appearance had for some Days preserved him from any particular Notice, but at length his frequent Visits to the Street where the Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* lived, his earnest Gazing at the House, his eager Attention in observing all who went in or out, attracted the Observation of some of the Servants. Mademoiselle

de

de Gevinecourt's Woman, she who had so successfully pleaded her Lady's Cause when she stopped the Chevalier's Journey to *Paris*, had a Curiosity to see this Man whose odd Behaviour furnished so much Discourse for the Domesticks of the Marquis. They pointed him out to her as he sauntered along the Street, his Eyes magnetically as it were, drawn up to the Windows of *Madam de Berci's* Apartment.

The faithful *Maria* felt an Emotion at the Sight of this Man, for which she could not account; her Heart seemed to acknowledge an Acquaintance with him, and guided by a sudden Impulse, she ran into the Street and followed him at a little Distance, expecting when he would turn that she might see his Face.

The Chevalier, when he came to the End of the Street, stopped, as uncertain whether he should return to his Friend's House, or attempt once more to get a Sight of his Mistress. *Maria* who had already discovered something in his Air and Mein, notwithstanding his Disguise, which brought the Chevalier *des Essars* to her Remembrance, was fully convinced that it was he, by the View she now had of his Face. Transported with Joy, she was upon the Point of accosting him, but prudently repress this first motion, upon reflecting that he had doubtless assumed that Disguise for some
impor-

important Design, which might be defeated by an unseasonable Discovery, and therefore passing by without seeming to take Notice of him, she entered the House again by a back Way, and flew to acquaint her Lady with what she had seen.

Mademoiselle de Gevincourt had just quitted the Countess of Berci, whom she had in vain endeavoured to perswade to stay in *Paris*, during the Celebration of her Nuptials. ‘Madam de Berci is more dejected than ever, (said she) to *Maria*, as she entered her own Apartment. I love her sincerely, nor can I think myself happy while she is unfortunate.’

‘If it depends upon the Chevaliers Return Madam, said the overjoyed *Maria*, to make the Countess easy, she will soon be so, for he is here in *Paris*, I have seen him. How! interrupted Mademoiselle de Gevincourt, is the Chevalier here? What do you tell me! Is it possible?’

The charming Amazon had scarce Patience to listen to her Woman’s Account of the Chevalier’s Disguise, and the Manner in which she discovered him, so eager was she to communicate this good News to the young Marchioness de Saint Sauveur.

These Ladies being convinced from every Circumstance of the Chevalier’s Behaviour, that

that his Love for the Countess of *Berci* was as ardent as ever, resolved to acquaint her with all they had heard.

Madam de Berci affected to receive the News with great Composure, but the sudden Transition from Grief and Despondency, to Joy and Hope, was too powerfully exprest in her lovely Features, to leave them in doubt of the sweet Emotions with which her Heart was agitated; her Cheeks glowed with Blushes of Surprise and Pleasure; her Eyes sparkled with a Vivacity they had been long unused to; her Voice imperceptibly to herself, lost its plaintive Accent. Her fair Friends observed and were transported at the Alteration. They now found it no difficult Task to prevail upon her to stay in *Paris*.

‘Depend, upon it said Mademoiselle *de Gavincourt*, the Chevalier will not discover himself till after the Tournament, he is too fond of Glory to neglect this Opportunity of signalising his Return by some noble Exploit, and he expects to agreeably surprise his Friends.’ The Ladies had indeed guessed truly, the Chevalier *des Essars* resolved to appear in the Lists, and when the Turnement was ended to make himself known. He caused a new Suit of Armour to be made of the Colour of Ashes, beneath which, bright Flames seemed to break out; on his Shield was painted a Cupid, re-kindling

kindling his Torch, with this Motto, revived by Kindness. The Chevalier fully determined to keep himself concealed till after the Turnament, would no more venture to walk disguised thro' the Street where his Mistress lived - - - the Appearance of *Maria* had alarmed him, and tho' he was persuaded she did not then know him, yet he was Apprehensive that a second View might give her Suspicions that would awake her Curiosity.

In three Days the Nuptials of *Made-moiselle de Guvincourt* were to be solemnised, and the fourth was destined for the Turnament. During this Interval the Chevalier indulged the most delightful Reflections. His Imagination filled with the Idea of the Countess of *Bercei*, continually represented her to him as dissolved in Tears, lamenting his Loss, and devoting all her future Days to solitude and Grief. How did he exult in the Thought that his Presence would banish all her Sorrows, and restore her to Health, Peace, and Joy.

As soon as the wished for Morning appeared, the Chevalier arose full of Hope and pleasing Expectation, Monsieur *la Rouvre* would assist in putting on his Armour, never did he look so lovely Fierce as then, the Hero and the Lover were so happily blendid in the majestick Sweetness of his Countenance, that it was impossible
to

to behold him without feeling at once Delight and Awe. At the Sound of the Trumpets, the King and Queen, attended by the whole Court entered the Field, and took their Places upon a Magnificent Scaffold, erected for them.

The Bride glittering with Jewels but brighter in her own native Loveliness, was placed on a Scaffold opposite to their Majesties. On one Side of her sat the young Marchioness de Saint-Sauveur, and on the other the Countess of Berri. The Friends of that Lady who knew not her secret Motives for Emerging from that Solitude in which she had been so long buried, were surpris'd to see her in so publick an Assembly, herself gay as a Bride, and her charming Eyes animated with the sweetest of all Passions Hope, dealing round their restless Glances, while they were in search of the beloved Object that possessed all her Thoughts.

Mean time a great Number of the young Lords of the Court had tilted against each other, with various Success; four at length remained Masters of the Field; and the Judges seeing no other Knight offer himself to the Combat, were going to declare them Victors when the Chevalier des Essars presented himself in the Lists.

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The Eyes of the whole Assembly were immediately fixed upon this last Comer, his noble Air, the Gracefulness of his Figure, and that charming Confidence with which he demanded the Combat, won every Heart.

The great *Henry*, delighted with his Appearance, assured the *Queen* that this Stranger would carry away the Honour of the Day. The Heart of *Madam de Berri* by its fluttering Emotions instantly acknowledged its Conqueror. 'Tis he whispered she in a Rapture to the Bride, who as well as the young *Marchioness de Saint-Sauveur* had anxiously expected him.

But what cruel Tortures tore the Breast of the *Chevalier des Effars* at the Sight of the Countess in a Place where he so little expected to see her? she, whom he had been told had ever since his Absence devoted herself to Solitude and Melancholy, whom his fond Fancy had painted as dissolved in Tears, and sunk in languishing Dejection, yet whom he now beheld drest with studied Elegance as if desirous of pleasing; Joy sparkling in her Eyes, and Smiles of Pleasure wandering over her lovely Face. 'Perfidious Woman (said he to himself, as he stood contemplating her) is it thus my Loss is mourned?'

Wild with Jealousy and Despair, he doubtless would have gone to the Scaffold

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where she sat, and reproached her publicly for her Ingratitude and Inconstancy; but the Sound of the Trumpets recalled him to himself, and now animated with Rage, Indignation, and a Desire of shewing his faithless Mistress that he deserved, tho' he could not keep her Heart; with a Rapidity like Lightening he sprung forwards to meet his Adversary, and threw him to the Ground at the first Onset.

His three other Courses were performed with the same Skill and Valour, and were indeed so many Victories, and he remained sole Master of the Field. The Air resounded with the joyful Acclamations of the Multitude, and every Tongue repeated the Praises of the brave Stranger. The old Marquis *des Essars*, the Count of *Berci*, and the Marquisses *de Saint-Sauveur* who in those noble Exploits acknowledged the Chevalier *des Essars*, all eagerly crouded about him, and with the most rapturous Expressions of Joy, congratulated him on his Victory, and themselves on his Return.

The Chevalier who would gladly have withdrawn himself from the Lists, to avoid being known, finding it impossible to conceal himself any longer, took of his Casque, and embraced his Friends. The Gloom that hung upon his Brow, the Faintness of his Accent, and the apparent Disorder of his Mind filled them with Perplexity

plexity and Grief, but they had no Leisure to enquire into the Cause of his Uneasiness, for the Judges of the Field approaching, led him to the Queen's Scaffold to receive the Prize.

That Princess, after complimenting the Chevalier upon his Success, presented him with a Jewel of great Value, which he received kneeling, and with a Grace that charmed every Beholder. The Great *Henry* who had been talking to the *Marquis des Essars*, advancing to meet him, as he was leaving the Queen, to go and throw himself at his Feet, 'Chevalier, (said he, tapping his Shoulder with that easy Gaity, which was so natural to him) you have this Day disgraced four of the bravest Lords in my Court, and in Revenge I will give you Fetters that shall last you your Life.' All this Time the Countess of *Bercei* suffered great Inquietude. She had fully observed every Look and Motion of the Chevalier; but found not in them the ardent Lover her Imagination was so full of. He did not once turn his Eyes towards the Place where she sat, and after their Majesties were departed, he shewed no Eagerness to present himself to her, but continued talking in an easy Manner to the Old *Marquis des Essars* his Uncle; and when at last Civility obliged him to go and pay his Respects to the Bride, and her Company, he advanced not with the impatient Step of a Lover, but loitering, care-

less, and with an Attention, wholly disengaged. Grief, Disappointment, Anger, appeared by Turns in the fair Face of *Madam de Berci*; but struggling to conceal her Emotions, she received the Chevaliers Compliments, and returned them with a well personated Indifference. The new Countess of *Berci* and the young Marchioness *de Saint-Sauveur* were astonished at the Chevalier's Behaviour, and would have doubted the Truth of what *Maria* had told them, concerning his Disguise, had it not been confirmed to them by *Monsieur la Ronvere*, who thought he was no longer obliged to keep it secret, and was pleased to have an Opportunity of relating an Incident to the Countess, which set the Passion of the Chevalier in so strong, and so whimsical a Light.

He more than any other was surpris'd at the cold and indifferent Manner in which the Chevalier accosted the Countess, because he had so lately been a Witness of the Transports of his Passion. The two old Marquises *des Effars* and *de Saint-Sauveur* who hoped the Chevalier's Return would put an End to his Wanderings, and *Madam de Berci's* Grief by a happy Union, were both afflicted, and enraged at the Caprices of these Lovers, who seem'd determin'd to render themselves and their Friends for ever unhappy; but there was no Time to enter upon any Explanation, they were obliged

obliged to follow their Majesties to the Louvre. The Chevalier led the Bride to her Coach, and received her Hand again at the Gates of the Palace: during this Interval she observed him heedfully, and through all his assumed Gaity, discovered that his Heart was not at Ease, she was going to mention the Countess of *Berci* to him, but they were now in the Presence of their Majesties; and the brave old Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* approached to present the Bride to the King. Monsieur *la Rouvere* who was impatient to enquire into the Cause of the Chevalier's unaccountable Behaviour, seeing him disengaged, drew him aside, and expostulated with him upon it.

‘ Ah, Friend (said the Chevalier sighing)
‘ you have deceived me cruelly, could I
‘ have expected to see the Countess of *Berci*
‘ in so publick an Assembly, after the Re-
‘ presentation you made me of her Melan-
‘ cholly, her Love of Solitude, and her
‘ continued Tenderness for me!’

‘ You are indeed deceived, (said Mon-
‘ sieur *la Rouvere*) but it is by the Sug-
‘ gestions of your own jealous Fancy. It
‘ was the Hope of seeing you that carried
‘ Madam *de Berci* to the Tournament.’ He
then related to him in what Manner he
was discovered in his Disguise; the Effect
that News had on his Mistress, who con-
cluding

cluding he would appear at the Turnament, yielded to her Friend's Intreaties to be there.

These few Words entirely removed the Chevalier's Suspitions, all his Jealousy vanished in a Moment, and gave Place to Love, Hope and Joy; already his altered Looks prepared the Countess for a different Behaviour, the passionate yet respectful Glances he gave her, did not escape her Notice, she blushed with Pleasure and Surprise; yet still kept up her assumed Indifference. The Chevalier was stepping towards her, when the Marquis *des Effars* his Uncle fixed all his Attention, by addressing himself in this Manner to the King.

‘ It is with inconceivable Regret, my gracious Sovereign, that I find myself obliged to interrupt the Happiness of this Day, with Complaints of my Nephew's Ingratitude. Your Majesty will easily imagine that his Offences must needs be very great, since they have forced me to take this extraordinary Method to bring him to a just Sense of his Duty.’

This strange Speech filled all that were present with Astonishment and Uneasiness. The Chevalier was in the utmost Confusion, and the poor Countess wondered what new Miseries were preparing for her.

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The King having ordered the Marquis to proceed, 'Your Majesty, resumed he, and the whole Kingdom have been Witnesses to the more than parental Affection I have born to that ungrateful Man; loaded with Years and Infirmities, I came in Arms to defend his Innocence, and exposed my Life to preserve his Honour. It would be an endless Task to repeat all the Benefits I have conferred upon him, which he has only repaid by an obstinate Disobedience to my Will; twice I have attempted to secure his Happiness, by an honourable and advantageous Match, and each Time he has eluded my Wishes, and voluntarily banished himself from his Country rather than comply with the Proposals I made him.'

Scarce had the Marquis *des Essars* ended this Speech, when the old Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* following his lead, thus addressed himself to the King. 'Sire, (said he) my Daughter is not less guilty than the Chevalier, after all the Miseries she has suffered herself, after all the Affliction she has given her Parents and Friends on his Account; she has denied to give him her Hand, and to make her Disobedience more remarkable, refused to consent to what she once so ardently desired when it became our Will she should do so.'

These Complaints which at the Beginning had spread so much Consternation through the

the Company, and had filled the two Persons most concerned in them, with Grief and Confusion, now produced Smiles of Pleasure on every Face. The Chevalier was overjoyed since he found they were likely to terminate in his Marriage with the Countess of *Berci*, whose fair Face, though overspread with Blushes, expressed no Signs of Dissatisfaction. ‘Sire, (said the Chevalier, bowing profoundly low to the King) I should be the basest of Men if I did not acknowledge that the Obligations I have received from the Marquis *des Essars* are above all Gratitude and Return; I have indeed too long delayed to give him those Proofs of my Obedience and Submission to his Will, which he desires, but I hope he will pardon an Error which I die with Impatience to repair.’

‘And what have you to say, Madam, said the King smiling, to the Complaints your Father has made of you?’ Madam *de Berci* who only wanted to yield with Dignity, and expected a new Command from her Father and the King, replied with inaffable Grace: ‘That I have been the Cause of any Affliction to my Parents is one of the greatest Misfortunes of my Life: but your Majesty is, I hope convinced, that my Will has not always been in Fault; some Errors I have been led into from Want of Experience, but many more by a strange Concurrence of Circumstances’

stances, which hardly left me the Freedom
of Choice. As to the Point on which
my Father claims my Obedience, I can
only say, that the Condition of my Wi-
dowhood and other important Reasons
have seemed to me sufficient to dispense
with it.

The Countess of *Berci* did not imagine
the King would be satisfied with this Ex-
cuse ; but she had soon Cause to repent of
her Disingenuity, for that Prince, who
thought there was great Force in her Plea,
declared that she should be at Liberty to fol-
low her Inclinations.

Madam *de Berci* was in the utmost Con-
fusion at this unlooked for Decision ; her
Father was concerned, and her Friends
were in Pain for her ; but the Chevalier,
to whom it seemed the Sentence of his
Death, was in Despair, and approaching
the Countess, who was in visible Emotions,
‘ Ah, Madam, (said he) are all my Suffer-
ings for you forgot, and can you doom
to ceaseless Misery a Man who so at-
tently loves, and has so faithfully served
you ?’

Madam *de Berci* made no Answer ; but
the King who watched her Eyes and read
in them all that passed in her Heart, saw his
Interposition was necessary. And taking her
Hand, ‘ If I dispensed with your Obedience
to

' to your Father, Madam, (said he) I will not
 ' to your King, he regulated your first Choice,
 ' the second shall be yours and mine.'
 Saying this, he presented her Hand to the
 Chevalier, who received it with a Transport,
 which hardly left him Power to express his
 Gratitude. His Majesty to favour the Count-
 ess's Confusion, whose charming Face
 was all overspread with Blushes, drew the
 Marquis *de Saint-Sauveur* aside and entered
 into Discourse with him: this little Inter-
 val the Lovers employed, in removing those
 Doubts which had retarded their Happiness,
 and were likely to have separated them for
 ever. When his Majesty joined the Com-
 pany he found Madam *de Berci* with the
 Queen, that Princess who had conceived a
 great Esteem for the Chevalier *des Essars*,
 and had been much moved with the Mis-
 fortunes of the Countess of *Berci*, congrat-
 ulated them on this happy Event in Terms
 highly obliging to them both. The next
 Day saw the Celebration of their Nuptials,
 and every succeeding one brought an In-
 crease of Happiness to a Pair united as well
 by Virtue as by Love.

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